

HANDBOOK
OF
MORAL THEOLOGY

KOCH-PREUSS

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A HANDBOOK OF MORAL THEOLOGY

BY

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MAN'S DUTIES TO GOD

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PART I

THE DUTY OF INTERNAL WORSHIP

A. THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

CHAPTER I

FAITH

SECTION I

NATURE AND NECESSITY OF FAITH

I. NATURE OF FAITH.—Faith (*fides divina*) is a divinely infused virtue by which a man firmly believes whatever God has revealed and the Church proposes on His authority.

Faith, therefore, has a twofold object, the one material, the other formal. Its material object (*obiectum materiale*) are the truths revealed by God; its formal object (*obiectum formale*) or motive is God's infinite veracity, which, perceived by the human intellect with moral cer-

titude, produces a deep conviction of the divine authority and a satisfying realization of the content of Revelation.¹

Faith is elicited conjointly by the intellect and the will, and therefore involves complete subjection of all man's spiritual faculties to the authority of God. It is a free and therefore a moral act.²

Faith is opposed to sight (*videre*), to opinion (*opinari*), and to knowledge (*intellegere*). Sight is immediate vision; opinion is inclining to one side in preference to the other, but without cer-

1 Cfr. *Conc. Vatican.*, Sess. III, c. 3: "*Hanc fidem, quae humanae salutis initium est, Ecclesia catholica proficitur, virtutem esse supernaturalem, qua Dei aspirante et adiuvente gratia ab eo revelata vera esse credimus, non propter intrinsicam rerum veritatem naturali rationis lumine perspectam, sed propter auctoritatem ipsius Dei revelantis, qui nec falli nec fallere potest. . . . Porro fide divina et catholica ea omnia credenda sunt, quae in verbo Dei scripto vel tradito continentur et ab Ecclesia sive solemnium iudicio, sive ordinario et universali magisterio, tamquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur.*"—Cfr. can. 2, *De Fide*: "*Si quis dixerit, fidem divinam a naturali de Deo et rebus moralibus scientia non distinguere ac propterea ad fidem divinam non requiri, ut revelata veritas propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis credatur, anathema sit.*"—Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Spiritu et Litera*, c. 31 sq. (Migne, P. L., XLIV, 235).—J. Nienhaus, *De Actu Fidei Divinae*, Münster 1891, pp.

26 sqq.—St. Lederer, *Der Glaube als freie Heilserkenntnis*, Rodalben 1891.

2 Cfr. 2 Cor. X, 5; 1 John V, 9.—*Conc. Vatic.*, Sess. III, c. 3: "*Plenum revelanti Deo intellectus et voluntatis obsequium fide praestare tenemur.*"—Cfr. Sess. III, can. 5, *De Fide*.—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Tract. in Ioannem*, XXVI, n. 2: "*Intrare quisquam ecclesiam potest nolens, accedere ad altare potest nolens, accipere sacramentum potest nolens: credere non potest nisi volens.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 1607).—IDEM, *De Praedest. Sanct.*, c. 2, n. 5: "*Credere nihil aliud est, quam cum assensione cogitare.*" (P. L., XLIV, 963).—Cfr. Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 1.—G. Schmitt, *Vernunft und Wille in ihrer Beziehung zum Glaubensakt*, Augsburg 1903, pp. 51 sqq.—K. Ziesché, *Verstand und Wille beim Glaubensakt*, Paderborn 1909.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Theologische Zeitfragen*, 4th series, Freiburg 1908, pp. 12 sqq., 139 sqq.—F. Hettinger, *Apologie des Christen-*

tainty; knowledge is based upon perception. By faith we accept as certain the truths which God has revealed, though we have no knowledge of, and perhaps do not understand them.³ "What we know," says St. Augustine, "we owe to reason; what we believe, we owe to authority; what we hold merely as a matter of opinion, we owe to error."⁴

The material object of faith consists partly of natural truths (such as the reality of sense perception and the objectivity of the outside world, the data of nature, historical facts, etc.) and partly of truths belonging to the supernatural order. Hence there is a distinction between natural or human faith (*fides humana*) on the one hand, and supernatural faith (*fides divina*) on the other.

By the formal object of faith we understand the

tums, Vol. III, 9th ed., (by E. Müller), pp. 3 sqq., 152 sqq.

³ Cfr. Matt. XI, 25; XVI, 16 sq.; John VI, 70; XX, 29; 2 Cor. V, 7; Heb. XI, 1.

⁴ *De Util. Credendi*, c. 11, n. 25: "Quod intellegimus, debemus rationi, quod credimus, auctoritati, quod opinamur, errori." (Migne, P. L., XLII, 83).—V. Cathrein, S. J., *Glauben und Wissen*, Freiburg 1903.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. I., c. 2, qu. 2: "Credendi vox hoc loco putare, existimare, opinari non significat, sed, ut docent sacrae literae, certissimae assensionis vim habet, qua mens Deo sua mysteria aperi-
enti firme constanterque assentitur. Quamobrem is credit (quod ad

huius loci explicationem attinet), cui aliquid sine ulla haesitatione certum et persuasum est."—J. P. Gury, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, Lyons and Paris 1850, n. 176: "Fides in genere est assensus propter auctoritatem loquentis. Pressius ad rem nostram fides, in quantum est virtus, definitur habitus supernaturalis, infusus, inclinans intellectum ad firmiter assentiendum veritatibus a Deo revelatis et ab Ecclesia propositis propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis. In quantum vero est actus, dicitur assensus firmissimus datus rebus a Deo revelatis propter Dei revelantis auctoritatem."

motive or reason that induces a man to believe. This motive is *authority*.

Authority is either *natural* or *supernatural*.

Natural authority may be external or internal.

External authority consists in the testimony of others, and the belief it produces is known as *fides historica*.

Internal authority is based on reasons or arguments existing in the mind of the believer, and the faith produced by it is called philosophical (*fides philosophica*).

Theological faith (*fides theologica*), in the strict sense, rests upon supernatural or divine authority.

It follows that *fides divina* and *fides theologica* are not synonymous terms. The former has reference to the substance, the latter to the form. Theological faith is always *fides divina*, because whatever God reveals is supernatural in substance, referring to Himself, or to His relation towards men, or to their relation towards him.⁵ But *fides divina* is not necessarily always *fides theologica* because there is a kind of religious faith that is based solely on reason.

Fides divina et catholica is the term by which Catholic theologians designate belief in the

⁵ Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 1, art. 1: "Si consideremus materialiter ea, quibus fides assentit, non solum est ipse Deus, sed etiam multa alia, quae tamen sub assensu fidei non cadunt, nisi

secundum quod habent aliquem ordinem ad Deum, prout scilicet per aliquos divinitatis effectus homo adiuvatur ad tenendum in divinam fruitionem."

truths revealed by God and proposed for belief by the Catholic Church.⁶

To believe is not to take something for granted blindly, but to accept it as true on the authority of another. A child believes his parents, *i. e.*, accepts as true what they say, because he is convinced that they know the truth and wish to communicate it to him. Similarly, to believe God means to accept as true what He has revealed because He knows the truth and is incapable of deception.

In order to be able to believe rationally, therefore, man must first be certain that God has spoken, and, by implication, that there is a God, who is infinitely wise and truthful.⁷

Dr. Schell justly expressed surprise at the conduct of those who seek to spread the notion that the religious world-view of savants and scientists is founded upon positive knowledge rather than faith, whereas ordinary Christians and theologians depend upon authority and more or less arbitrarily construed systems. Surely no one believes that the followers of Kant, Hegel, Comte, James, etc., have accepted the systems of their respective masters as the result of independent study and research. Authority is authority, whether it be acknowledged or

⁶ *Conc. Vatic.*, Sess. III, cap. 3, *v. supra*, note 1.

⁷ Cfr. *Prop. Damnatae sub Innoc. XI*, n. 21 (Denzinger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum*, 11th ed., by Cl. Bannwart,

S.J., Freiburg 1908, n. 1171): "*Assensus fidei supernaturalis et utilis ad salutem stat cum notitia solum probabili revelationis, immo cum formidine qua quis formidet, ne non sit locutus.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1038).

not, whether it be surrounded by the aureole of sainthood or the glamor of worldly renown, whether it be exercised by a prophet or a philosopher, by a pagan or an Apostle. How few even among the highly educated would have any elaborate world-view of their own if it could be obtained only by personal effort and had to be based entirely on internal reasons, to the exclusion of authority!⁸

2. NECESSITY OF FAITH.—Faith is absolutely necessary to salvation. This necessity is based upon two grounds: first, the positive law of God, and, secondly, the part this virtue plays in the process of justification.

The teaching of Scripture on this point is unmistakable. Mark XVI, 16: "He that believeth not shall be condemned." John III, 18: "He that doth not believe is already judged." Heb. XI, 6: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." 1 John III, 23: "And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ."

Faith is the first, and an absolutely necessary, requirement for every adult man who wishes to enter into vital relationship with God and the divinely appointed order of salvation. In the words of the Tridentine Council, faith is "the beginning of human salvation, the foundation and

⁸ H. Schell, *Die göttliche Wahrheit des Christentums*, Vol. I, Paderborn 1895, Preface, p. xii; *Idem*, *Apologie des Christentums*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., Paderborn 1902, pp. 214 sqq.

the root of all justification, without which it is impossible to please God;" in fine, it is the basis of the whole supernatural life, the beginning and the foundation of all man's duties to God, of every act of divine worship, internal as well as external.⁹

It follows as a necessary corollary that formal unbelief entails the loss of salvation and, therefore, if persisted in, spells eternal damnation.

The value and importance of religious faith may be deduced from the two scriptural truths that faith will gain "the victory which overcometh the world"¹⁰ and that "the end of faith is the salvation of souls."¹¹

It is not by knowledge but by faith that man is saved. Without underrating the claims of science and philosophy we may say that neither can accomplish what faith has accomplished for the civilization of mankind, and that neither will ever be able to supplant religious belief. It is as true to-day as it was at the time of Clement of Alexandria, that "the wisdom of Christians is to believe in Christ."¹²

⁹ Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. Vi, c. 8 (cfr. also c. 6).—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, 4th ed., St. Louis 1921, pp. 97, 392.

¹⁰ 1 John V, 4; cfr. Eph. VI, 16.

¹¹ 1 Pet. I, 9; Prov. XVII, 6 (Sept.): Τοῦ πιστοῦ ὁλος ὁ κόσμος τῶν χρημάτων, τοῦ δὲ ἀπίστου οὐδὲ ὀβολός.—St. Jerome,

Epist., LIII (al. CIII), n. 10: "*Credenti totus mundus divitiarum est. Infidelis autem etiam obolo indiget.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXII, 549).

¹² *Stromata*, II, c. 2; cfr. II, c. 4: "Κυριώτερον τῆς ἐπιστήμης ἢ πίστις καὶ ἔστιν αὐτῆς κριτήριον. (Migne, *P. G.*, VIII, 948 A).

The paramount importance of religious faith may easily cause us to overlook the extent to which we live by faith even in worldly matters and the narrowness of the limits that surround the intellectual possessions we have acquired by study, research, and investigation. The historian has faith in his sources; the judge accepts the statements of witnesses; the ruler trusts his officials and advisers; the physician is helpless unless he has the confidence of his patient. The simplest acts of every-day life become difficult, if not impossible, when doubt has sapped faith. Who could *prove* to me that the waiter who brings me my breakfast is not intent on poisoning me, that the barber who applies his razor to my throat is not a blood-thirsty anarchist, that the engineer of the train on which I travel is not a dangerous lunatic? ¹³

READINGS.—Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, I, dist. 23–25 (Migne, *P. L.*, CXXII, 805).—St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 23 sqq. (*Opera Omnia*, III, 469).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 1 sqq.—F. Suarez, *De Fide Theol.*, disp. 1 sqq. (*Opera Omnia*, XII, 8 sqq., 334 sqq.).—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmat.*, Vol. VIII, 2nd ed., pp. 49 sqq.—S. Schiffini, S.J., *Tract. de Virtutibus Infusis*, pp. 17 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Moralis*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 4 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, Paris, 1905, pp. 346 sqq., 354 sqq.—G. La-housse, *Tract. de Virtutibus Theologicis*, Bruges 1900.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, 4th ed., St. Louis 1921, pp. 100 sqq., 274 sqq.—J. Kirschkamp, *Der Geist des Katholizismus in der Lehre vom Glauben und von der Liebe*, Paderborn 1895.—V. McNabb, O.P., *Oxford Conferences on Faith*, London, 1905.—H. Pope, O.P., art. "Faith" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, pp. 755 sqq. (with an extensive bibliography).—G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, London and New York 1920, pp. 71 sqq.—C. Martin, *De Necessitate Credendi*, Paderborn 1906.—P. P. McKenna, O.P., *The Theology of Faith*, Dublin. 1914.

¹³ Cfr. J. Mausbach, *Einige Kernfragen christlicher Welt- und Lebensanschauung*, 7th ed., p. 17.

SECTION 2

DUTY AND EXTENT OF FAITH

1. We are obliged to believe whatever God has revealed and the Church proposes to us in matters of faith and morals.

It is not permissible to distinguish between essential and non-essential dogmas (*articuli fundamentales aut non fundamentales*). To believe some of the truths revealed by God and reject others would be to have no faith at all, because the motive of credibility is the authority of God, who is the absolute Truth.¹

“Our act of faith must implicitly extend to everything that God has revealed. . . . But it is not sufficient to make an act of implicit faith comprising all that God has revealed. We are bound to know and believe certain revealed truths explicitly.” Hence the distinction between *fides explicita* and *fides implicita*.²

1 Cfr. St. Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, l. XVI, c. 3; cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3.

2 Cfr. Matt. XXVIII, 20; Acts XX, 26 sq.—J. P. Gury, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 176: “Fides est . . . explicita vel impli-

cita ratione obiecti, prout hoc in se est expressum et evolutum, aut in alio tantum contentum. Dicitur etiam fides explicita vel implicita ratione actus, sic v. g., si dicas: Credo in sanctissimam Trinitatem, elicis actum fidei explicitum in illud mysterium. Si vero dicas;

Some of the truths that God has revealed must be believed as *necessary means of salvation*, whereas explicit belief in others is purely a matter of *precept*.

Which truths must be believed explicitly as a necessary means of salvation?

St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Hebrews: "Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him."³

From this text some theologians have concluded that the only truths which a man must believe explicitly in order to be saved are the existence of God and the fact that He rewards those that seek Him. But this conclusion is unwarranted. For, in the first place, these two truths are not articles of faith in the strict sense, but axioms perceived by unaided reason, and, secondly, the Apostle in the context from which the passage is detached, though speaking of supernatural faith, has no intention of determining the truths which a Christian must hold to be saved. What he wishes to say is that belief in the existence of God and His Providence form part of the disposition required of a heathen to prepare himself for the reception of the Christian Revela-

Credo omnia, quae docet Ecclesia esse credenda, elicis actum fidei implicitum in singula dogmata revelata."—G. Hoffmann, *Die Lehre von*

der Fides Implicita innerhalb der kath. Kirche, Vol. I, Leipsic 1903, pp. 35 sqq.

³ Heb. XI, 6,

tion, which, besides the existence of God and the fact that He rewards those that seek Him, comprises other truths that are also necessary for salvation, *viz.*: the divine sonship of Jesus and the Atonement, which in turn involve the doctrine of Christ's twofold nature, His Incarnation, His Passion and death, the Resurrection, and the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, without which the dogma of the Incarnation would be meaningless.⁴ Without an explicit belief in all these truths it is impossible to be saved, though there may be exceptional cases in which it is morally impossible to know the dogmas of the Incarnation and the Trinity, and consequently an implicit belief in them may suffice for salvation.

2. Under normal conditions a Christian is bound to believe *fide divina* all the truths proposed by the Catholic Church on the authority of God, and to try to gain as thorough and complete

⁴ John XVII, 3; Acts IV, 12.—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. sub Innocentio XI.*, n. 22: "Nonnisi fides unius Dei necessaria videtur necessitate mediū, non autem explicita Remuneratoris."—*Ibid.*, n. 64: "Absolutionis capax est homo, quantumvis laboret ignorantia mysteriorum fidei, et etiamsi per negligentiam, etiam culpabilem, nesciat mysterium sanctissimæ Trinitatis et Incarnationis Domini nostri Iesu Christi." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1172, 1214.)—Cfr. the so-called Athanasian Creed, "Quicumque" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 40) and St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 1, art.

8.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 183: "Cognoscenda sunt necessario necessitate mediū: 1. Deus unus. . . . 2. Deus ut providus pro præsentī vita; 3. Deus ut finis ultimus hominis pro altera vita et consequenter æternus bonorum operum remunerator malorumque vindex (Heb. XI, 6.) Controvertitur autem, utrum mysteria Trinitatis et Incarnationis sint etiam explicitè credenda necessitate ipsa mediū independentē a necessitate præcepti. Affirmat probabilius S. Alphonsus etc., negant autem non improbabili-ter alii cum Suarez. . . ."

an understanding of them as possible. St. Peter says: "Be ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you."⁵ However, this command does not bind all men equally, but each according to his talent, character, and vocation.

a) It is absolutely necessary to acquire a knowledge of those religious truths without which one cannot lead a Christian life and receive the Sacraments worthily. This is but another way of saying that every Catholic must know and believe the substance of the so-called Apostles' Creed and the Decalogue, the Sacraments which are of obligation, the precepts of the Church, and the Lord's Prayer. Persons who are engaged mainly in physical labor satisfy this obligation by hearing sermons and, if possible, attending other religious instructions. This duty weighs more heavily on those who live amid conditions that endanger the faith. Educated persons, especially if engaged in intellectual pursuits, are in duty bound to study their religion more thoroughly, though no specific rules can be laid down, conditions being so different.

It goes without saying that the duty of studying the truths of Revelation binds in a special manner those who have to instruct others.⁶

⁵ 1 Pet. III, 15.

⁶ Cfr. Matthew XIII, 52; M.

Jocham, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. III, p. 31.

Thus a priest should not be satisfied with having completed his theological course, but strive to increase and deepen the knowledge he has gained in the seminary.

b) Truths that do not strictly belong to the deposit of faith, theological opinions (*theologumena*), private revelations, pious legends, etc., may be accepted *fide humana* and should be treated reverently if there are no solid reasons for doubting or rejecting them.⁷

c) Faith should be frequently renewed by explicit acts (*fides actualis*), either general or particular.

In making an act of faith it is not necessary to employ any particular formula. All that is required is that the mind be directed to God and give its assent to the truths He has revealed. However, the recitation of an appropriate formula may constitute an act of faith, and the Church has indirectly recommended several such formulas by attaching indulgences to them.

While adults are in duty bound to make occasional acts of faith, the habitual faith infused by Baptism suffices for children.

How often acts of faith should be made cannot be decided by a general rule. "This divine precept sometimes obliges *per se*, as when the truths of Revelation are first made known to a man, and he becomes conscious of his obligation; sometimes it obliges merely *per accidens*,

⁷ Cfr. Emil Michael, S.J., *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes im Mittelalter*, Vol. III, pp. 203 sqq.; F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol.

I, 7th ed., pp. 295 sq.; J. Zahn, *Einführung in die christliche Mystik*, pp. 517 sqq., Paderborn 1908.

as when one has committed a sin against faith, or has to fulfill a duty for which an act of faith is prescribed;"⁸ also, we may add, when a solemn oath is taken, and, finally, in the hour of death. "For such as have once made their act of faith, it will be sufficient, in order to fulfill the divine precept, if the act of faith is renewed implicitly, as is done whenever we pray, assist at Mass, or receive any of the Sacraments."⁹

d) Every Christian is moreover bound to treasure the precious gift of faith and to increase it to the best of his ability. Col. I, 10: "[We cease not to pray for you] that you may walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."¹⁰

⁸ Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 168.

⁹ *Ibid.*—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. ab Alexandro VII.*, n. 1: "Homo nullo unquam vitae suae tempore tenetur elicere actum fidei, spei et caritatis ex vi praeceptorum divinorum ad eas virtutes pertinentium."—*Prop. Damnat. sub Innocentio XI.*, n. 16: "Fides non censetur cadere sub praeceptum speciale et secundum se."—*Ibid.*, n. 17: "Satis est actum fidei semel in vita elicere."—*Ibid.*, n. 65: "Sufficit illa mysteria [SS. Trinitatis et Incarnationis] semel credidisse." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1101, 1166 sq., 1215.)—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 178: "Quandonam urgeat praeceptum fidei elicendae? Resp. 1^o. Urget per se: 1. post usum rationis completum ad incipiendum vitam christianam; 2. in articulo mortis, ad proximius tenendum ad Deum; 3.

saepius in vita, saltem semel in anno et iuxta plures singulis mensibus. Ceterum, qui christiane vivit, sufficienter hoc praeceptum adimplet exercendo alios actus religionis. Resp. 2^o. Urget per accidens: 1. urgente gravi tentatione, quae aliter vinci nequit; 2. quando adimplendum est praeceptum, quod fidem requirit, v. g. confessionis; 3. post lapsum in haeresim aut fidem negatam. Ita omnes. An explicite elicendi sint actus fidei? Sufficiunt generatim actus impliciti in illis, qui scientiam sufficientem veritatum credendarum habent. Hinc praecepto satisfacit, qui devote audit missam, adorat Crucifixum, orat, crucem format, sacramenta recipit."

¹⁰ Cfr. 1 Pet. II, 2; 2 Pet. III, 18.—St. Augustine, *Epistolae*, 120 (al. 222), n. 2: "Quae fidei firmitate tenes, etiam rationis

"It appears to me a sign of carelessness," says St. Anselm of Canterbury, "if, having been confirmed in the faith, we do not take pains to understand what we believe."¹¹ And St. Thomas Aquinas writes: "When a man is willing to believe, he loves the truth, meditates upon it, and takes to heart whatever reasons he can find in support thereof, and with regard to this, human reason does not exclude the merit of faith, but is a sign of greater merit."¹²

The most effective means of confirming the faith are prayer, explicit acts of belief, devout meditation on the truths necessary for salvation, regular and attentive hearing of sermons and instructions, courageous public profession of the faith when called for, and especially, living up to its requirements.¹³

The most dangerous enemies of the faith are vainglory, greed, and impurity. Therefore every Catholic should guard against concupiscence of the eyes as well as of the flesh, and against pride

luce conspicias."—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 3: "*Absit namque, ut hoc in nobis Deus oderit, in quo nos reliquis animantibus excellentiores creavit. Absit, inquam, ut ideo credamus, ne rationem accipiamus sive quaeramus, quam etiam credere non possemus, nisi rationales animas habemus.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIII, 453.)

¹¹ *Cur Deus Homo*, I, I, c. 2.

¹² *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 2,

art. 10: "*Quum enim homo habet promptam voluntatem ad credendum, diligit veritatem creditam, et super ea excogitat, et amplectitur, si quas rationes ad hoc invenire potest; et quantum ad hoc ratio humana non excludit meritum fidei, sed est signum maioris meriti.*"

¹³ Matt. X, 32 sq.; Mark IX, 23; Luke VIII, 15; XVII, 5; John VII, 17; VIII, 47; 1 Tim. I, 19; III, 9.

of life, so that he may preserve the grace of God, and with it, the virtue of faith.¹⁴

e) Another duty incumbent upon every Christian is to prove his faith by deeds, *i. e.*, to live according to the truths which he believes. Faith must grow into hope and charity and bring forth good works. If it is not effective through charity, it cannot exert its innate power. To acquire a living faith and make it the load-star of life is the first duty of every Christian.¹⁵

A Protestant writer asserts that the distinction between

14 Matt. XIII, 22; Luke VIII, 14; XIV, 16-20; John V, 44; XII, 42 sq.; 1 Tim. VI, 10.

15 Matt. VII, 21; XIII, 23; John VI, 29; Rom. II, 13; IV, 5; Gal. V, 6; Jas. II, 14-20.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 7, can. 13.—St. Augustine, *Tr. in Ioā.*, 29, n. 6: "Si creditis in eum (John vi, 29), creditis ei: non autem continuo qui credit ei, credit in eum. Nam et daemones credebant ei, et non credebant in eum. Rursus etiam de apostolis ipsius possumus dicere: credimus Paulo, sed non: credimus in Paulum; credimus Petro, sed non. credimus in Petrum. . . . Quid est ergo credere in Deum? Credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire et eius membris incorporari. Ipsa est ergo fides, quam de nobis exigit Deus." (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 1631.)—IDEM, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 77, n. 8: "Credere in Deum . . . utique plus est quam credere Deo. Nam et homini cuilibet plerumque credendum est, quamvis in eum non sit credendum. Hoc est ergo credere in Deum credendo adhaerere ad

bene cooperandum bona operanti Deo." (P. L., XXXVI, 988.)—IDEM, *ibid.*, 130, n. 1: "Hoc est credere in Christum, diligere Christum, non quomodo daemones credebant, sed non diligebant. . . . Nos autem sic credamus, ut in ipsum credamus diligentes eum." (P. L., XXXVII, 1704.)—IDEM, *Sermon.*, 144 (al. 61, de Verbis Domini), n. 2: "Multum interest, utrum quisque credat ipsum Christum et utrum credat in Christum. Nam ipsum esse Christum et daemones crediderunt, nec tamen in Christum daemones crediderunt. Ille enim credit in Christum, qui et sperat in Christum et diligit Christum. Nam si fidem habet sine spe ac sine dilectione, Christum esse credit, non in Christum credit. Qui ergo in Christum credit, credendo in Christum venit in eum Christus, et quodammodo unitur in eum et membrum in corpore eius efficitur. Quod fieri non potest, nisi et spes accedat et caritas." (P. L., XXXVIII, 788.)—Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm. de Symbolo* (al. 881, de Tempore), c. 1 (P. L., XL, 1911).

credere Deo, *credere Deum*, and *credere in Deum* is of Hussite origin.¹⁶ This is not true. St. Augustine employs the distinction, and it was developed by Walafrid Strabo,¹⁷ Peter Lombard,¹⁸ St. Thomas Aquinas,¹⁹ and other Scholastic authors. Basing his teaching upon that of the "Master of the Sentences," John Herolt, O.P., who died in 1468, explains: "There is a difference between the three expressions: *Credere Deo* means to believe that whatever God says is true. . . . *Credere Deum* means to believe that He is truly God. . . . *Credere in Deum* means to believe in Him, to love Him, and to seek to become united with Him by means of good works."²⁰ Luther in his commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, cites the distinction here explained and ascribes it, not to Hus or the Bohemian Brethren, but to Peter Lombard.²¹

READINGS.—A. Fischer, *De Salute Infidelium*, Essen 1886, pp. 11 sqq.—F. Schmid, *Die ausserordentlichen Heilswege für die gefallene Menschheit*, Brixen 1899.—W. Liese, *Der heilsnotwendige Glaube*, Freiburg 1902.—R. M. Martin, *De Necessitate Credendi et Credendorum*, Paderborn 1906, pp. 91 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S. J., *Theologische Zeitfragen*, 5th Series, Freiburg 1908, pp. 3 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 177 sqq., Barcelona 1918.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 4 sqq., Innsbruck 1914

¹⁶ Cfr. F. Fricker, *Luthers kleiner Katechismus*, Göttingen 1898, p. 183.

¹⁷ *Glossa Ordinaria in Epist. ad Rom.*, IV, 5 (Migne, P. L., CXIV, 482).

¹⁸ *Sent.*, III, dist. 23, n. 4 (P. L., CXCII, 805).

¹⁹ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 2, art. 2.

²⁰ See N. Paulus in the *Zeitschrift für kath. Theologie*, Innsbruck, 1902, p. 427.

²¹ Cfr. H. Denifle, O.P., *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 855 sqq.; A. M. Weiss, O.P., *Apologie des Christentums*, Vol. III, 4th ed., Part 2, pp. 1109 sqq.

SECTION 3

QUALITIES AND FRUITS OF FAITH

I. THE QUALITIES OF FAITH.—The qualities of faith flow from its nature and purpose.

I. The nature of faith demands that it be (a) *universal* and (b) *firm*.

a) Faith is universal (*universalis*) if it, at least according to the will of the believer (*implicite*), extends to *all* the truths revealed by God (*depositum fidei*) and attested and proposed by the Catholic Church (*dogmata declarata*). The reason is, as we have observed before, that all revealed truths rest upon the same basis, namely, the infallible authority of God. Consequently, were a man to reject or obstinately to deny even one revealed truth, he would not possess the theological virtue of faith.¹

“You [Manichæans] who believe what you like and refuse to believe what does not suit you in the Gospel,” says St. Augustine in his letter to Faustus, “believe yourselves rather than the Gospel.”² St. Thomas develops this thought as follows: “He who adheres to the teach-

¹ Matt. XXVIII, 20; Mark XVI, 16. *quod vultis creditis, quod vultis non creditis, vobis potius quam*

² *Contra Faustum Manich.*, 1. XVII, c. 3: “*Qui in evangelio* XLII, 342.)” (Migne, P. L.,

ing of the Church as to an infallible rule, manifestly assents to whatever the Church teaches; otherwise, if, of the things taught by the Church, he holds what he chooses to hold and rejects what he chooses to reject, he no longer adheres to the teaching of the Church as to an infallible rule, but to his own will. Hence it is evident that a heretic who obstinately disbelieves one article of faith, is not prepared to follow the teaching of the Church in all things; but if he is not obstinate, he is not in heresy, but only in error. Therefore it is clear that such a heretic with regard to one article has no faith in the other articles, but only a kind of opinion in accordance with his own will.”³

b) Faith is firm (*fides firma*) when it admits of no doubt. Belief in divine Revelation necessarily excludes doubt because it is based upon the authority of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Though a mere opinion can never be called faith in the theological sense of the term, yet firmness as a quality of genuine faith admits of varying degrees. This plainly appears from Holy Scripture, which speaks of a weak faith that is susceptible of being

³ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3: “Manifestum est, quod ille, qui inhaeret doctrinae Ecclesiae tamquam infallibili regulae, omnibus assentit, quae Ecclesia docet; alioquin si de his, quae Ecclesia docet, quae vult, tenet, et quae non vult, non tenet, non iam inhaeret Ecclesiae doctrinae sicut infallibili regulae, sed propriae voluntati. Et sic manifestum est, quod haereticus, qui

pertinaciter discredidit unum articulum fidei, non est paratus sequi in omnibus doctrinam Ecclesiae; si enim non pertinaciter, iam non est haereticus, sed solum errans. Unde manifestum est, quod talis haereticus circa unum articulum, fidem non habet de aliis articulis, sed opinionem quandam secundum propriam voluntatem.”

strengthened.⁴ "A man's faith," says the Angelic Doctor, "may be described as being greater, in one way, on the part of the intellect, on account of its greater certitude and firmness, and, in another way, on the part of the will, on account of its greater promptitude, devotion, or confidence."⁵

2. With regard to its object or purpose, faith must be (a) *lively* and (b) *constant*.

a) Faith is lively (*viva, efficax*) when it is combined with charity, which is its necessary form, and when, in co-operation with charity, it causes men to avoid evil and to do good according to the law of God. "He that loveth not," says St. John, "abideth in death."⁶ And again: "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is charity."⁷ St. Paul declares that faith without charity is worthless, and that charity, therefore, is greater than faith and hope⁸ because it is "the more excellent way"⁹ and "the bond of perfection."¹⁰ "To believe in God,"

⁴ Ps. CXV, 1; Matt. VIII, 10, 26; XIV, 31; XV, 28; XVII, 19; Mark IX, 23; 1 Cor. XVI, 13; 2 Cor. IV, 13; Eph. IV, 10; 2 Tim. I, 12.—*Conc. Vatican.*, Sess. III, c. 3, can. 6, *de fide*.

⁵ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 4: "*Potest fides in aliquo dici maior propter maiorem certitudinem et firmitatem, alio modo ex parte voluntatis propter maiorem promptitudinem seu devotionem vel confi-*

dentiam."—Cfr. *Prop. damnat. sub Innocentio XI.*, n. 19: "*Voluntas non potest efficere, ut assensus fidei in seipso sit magis firmus, quam mereatur pondus rationum ad assensum impellentium.*" (*Denzinger-Bannwart*, n. 1169).

⁶ 1 John III, 14.

⁷ 1 John IV, 8.

⁸ 1 Cor. XIII, 1-3, 13.

⁹ 1 Cor. XII, 31.

¹⁰ Col. III, 14.

says St. Augustine, "means to love Him believingly, to seek Him trustfully, and to be incorporated with His members."¹¹

Faith must furthermore be perfect (*perfecta*), i. e., informed or animated by charity (*caritate formata*). If it is separated from charity, that is to say, if the believer does not live up to its dictates, faith is dead (*fides mortua sive informis*) and cannot attain its purpose.

Note, however, that a dead faith may still be a true faith, because faith is not necessarily forfeited by mortal sin.¹² "Without charity," writes St. Augustine, "faith may indeed exist, but cannot profit a man."¹³

b) A man's faith is constant (*constans, fortis*) when it disposes him to sacrifice all he has, even life itself, rather than reject any truth re-

¹¹ Tr. in Ioa., 29, n. 6.

¹² Rom. II, 13; Gal. V, 6; Jas. II, 14-26; 2 Pet. I, 10.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 7: "*Fides, nisi ad eam spes accedat et caritas, neque unit cum Christo neque corporis eius vivum membrum efficit. Qua ratione verissime dicitur, fidem sine operibus mortuam et otiosam esse et in Christo Iesu neque circumcisionem aliquid valere neque praeputium, sed fidem, quae per caritatem operatur. Hanc fidem ante baptismi sacramentum ex apostolorum traditione catechumeni ab ecclesia petunt, quum petunt fidem vitam aeternam praestantem, quam sine spe et caritate praestare fides*

non potest."—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 158 (al. 16, *De Verbis Apost.*), n. 6: "*Incipit homo a fide: quid pertinet ad fidem? Credere. Sed adhuc ista fides discernatur ab immun-dis spiritibus. . . . Si tantum credis, et sine spe vivis, vel dilectionem non habes. . . . Adde ergo fidei spem. Et quae spes est nisi de aliqua conscientiae bonitate? Speique ipsi adde caritatem.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 865).

¹³ *De Trin.*, XV, c. 18, n. 32: "*Sine caritate quippe fides potest quidem esse, sed non prodesse.*" (Migne, P. L., XLII, 1083).—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 4, art. 3-4.

vealed by God.¹⁴ The value and dignity of faith lies in this that it equips a man with a power which enables him on the one hand to triumph over the world by giving him courage to stand firm in the stormy sea of life, or, as St. Paul, employing a different metaphor, puts it, to “extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one,”¹⁵ and, on the other hand, exercise a salutary influence upon his character by purifying his heart and inspiring him with “mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, and patience from above.”¹⁶

II. THE FRUITS OF FAITH.—The principal fruits of faith are: (1) “fear of the Lord,” which is “the beginning of wisdom;”¹⁷ (2) that “joy of the Lord” which Christ promised to His faithful servants;¹⁸ and (3) an enlightened zeal for souls, *i. e.*, the active and constant desire to spread the knowledge and the love of God among men by word and example;—in a word, the life of faith that is lived by the just man,¹⁹ who is convinced that despite all sufferings and tribulations²⁰ he will, if he perseveres, ultimately enter

¹⁴ Matt. X, 32 sqq.; XI, 7; Luke IX, 26; Eph. IV, 14; Phil. I, 27 sq.; 1 Pet. V, 9.

¹⁵ Eph. VI, 16.

¹⁶ Col. III, 12; 1 John V, 4 sq.; cfr. Rom. VIII, 35–39.

¹⁷ Cfr. Prov. I, 7.

¹⁸ Matt. XXV, 21.

¹⁹ Rom. I, 17.

²⁰ Rom. VIII, 18.—Cfr. *Breviar. Rom., d. d.* 10. *Aug., Resp. ad Lect.* 6: “*Beatus Laurentius clamavit et dixit: Deum meum colo, illi soli servio et ideo non timeo tormenta tua. Mea nox obscurum non habet, sed omnia in luce clarescunt.*”

into the joy of Heaven, because, in the words of St. John, "whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith."²¹

In his faith the believing Christian possesses the germ of eternal life, which grows in the soul until it develops into the beatific vision;²² for "he that believeth in the Son hath life everlasting."²³

"By faith," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "they [Gedeon, Barac, Samson, and the prophets] conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons; they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by

²¹ John V, 4.

²² St. Thomas, *Opusc.*, IX, c. 2: "*Fides praelibatio quaedam est illius cognitionis, quae nos in futuro beatos facit.*"

²³ John III, 36.—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 384 (al. 1, *De Verbis Apost.*), n. 3: "*Nullae sunt maiores divitiae, nulli thesauri, nulli honores, nulla mundi huius maior substantia, quam est fides catholica, quae peccatores homines salvat, caecos illuminat, infirmos curat, catechumenos baptizat, fideles iustificat, poenitentes reparat, iustos*

augmentat, martyres coronat, virgines, viduas et coniugatos casto pudore conservat, clericos ordinat, sacerdotes consecrat, regnis coelestibus praeparat, in aeterna haereditate cum angelis sanctis communicat. Sicut ipse Dominus promittendo confirmat (Matt. xxii, 30): *In resurrectione neque nubunt neque uxores ducunt, sed erunt aequales angelis Dei.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIX, 1690).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 45, art. 1 and 4.

the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goat-skins, being in want, distressed, afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth.”²⁴

How completely the lives of the early Christians were transformed by faith is graphically described in the writings of St. Justin Martyr. “Formerly,” he says, “we took pleasure in deeds of impurity, now we love only chastity; formerly we engaged in magic, now we serve the good and uncreated God; formerly we sought wealth and property above all else, now we hold our possessions in common and give to the needy; formerly we hated one another and quarrelled, now, after the appearance of Christ, we enter into intimate relations with strangers and pray for our enemies.”²⁵

St. Cyprian, writing from personal experience, describes the power of faith as follows: “Whilst I sat in darkness and was buffeted to and fro upon the sea of life without a hold, ignorant of life’s aim, deserted by truth and light, I regarded in my then moral condition as extremely hard what the divine mercy promised me for my salvation, namely, that a man can be born again and, animated by a new life through the laver of salutary water, lay aside the things of the past, and, the body remaining unchanged, transform his mind and heart. How is such a great change (*conversio*) possible? I asked; [how is it possible] that a man should suddenly cast off that which was either born with him or has become second nature to him by long usage?”²⁶ This has taken broad and deep root within me. When will he learn economy who is used to luxurious living . . .? And he who shone

²⁴ Heb. XI, 33 sqq.

²⁵ *Apol.*, I, 14.

²⁶ “*Vel genuinum situ materiae naturalis obdurit vel usurpatum diu senio vetustatis inolevit.*”

in gold and purple, when will he condescend to wear the simple garb of the poor? He who delighted in dignities²⁷ and positions of honor cannot accommodate himself to the obscurity of private life; surrounded by the crowd of his clients, accompanied by a numerous retinue of servile dependents, he would regard it as a punishment to be left alone. Since the instigations continue, drunkenness must invite, as it did in former times, pride must puff up, anger must inflame, greed must cause unrest, cruelty must incite, ambition must give pleasure, and voluptuousness must carry away. Such things I had often revolved in my mind. For as I myself was held captive by many errors, in which I had been entrapped during my previous life, not believing that I should be able to get rid of them, I was a slave of the vices that stuck to me and, despairing of better things, compromised with my vices as if they were members of my household. But after the stains of my previous life had been washed away in the water of regeneration, and the light from above had been poured into my purified heart, now free from sin; after I had partaken of the heavenly spirit, and the second birth had transformed me into a new man, then in a miraculous manner that which had been doubtful became certain, that which had been concealed became manifest, that which had been dark became clear. I received strength to undertake what had formerly seemed difficult, and to do things that had appeared impossible. . . . To sing one's own praises is repugnant; but it cannot be boastfulness, rather it is gratitude that prompts a man not to ascribe all these things to human power, but to extol them as a gift of God; the freedom from sin which I now enjoy is a result of faith."²⁸

²⁷ "*Fascibus*."

²⁸ *Ad Donat.*, c. 3-4 (*Corpus Script. Eccles. Lat.*, Vol. III, 1, 5).

READINGS.—S. Storchenau, *Der Glaube des Christen, wie er sein soll* (ed. by H. Hurter, S.J.), Freiburg 1895.—J. B. Zwerger, *Der Glaube als göttliche Tugend* (3rd ed., by A. Michelitsch), Graz 1906.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 346 sqq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., pp. 22 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 7th ed., pp. 303 sqq., Paderborn 1913.—Ant. Straub, S.J., *De Analyti Fidei*, Innsbruck 1922.—R. Schultes, P.P., *Fides Implicita. Geschichte der Lehre von der Fides Implicita und Explicita in der Kath. Theologie*, Vol. I, Ratisbon 1920.

SECTION 4

SINS AGAINST FAITH

Opposed to the virtue of faith are doubt, heresy, infidelity, schism, apostasy, and superstition.

I. DOUBT.—Doubt is the state of a mind hesitating whether to give assent to a truth or to withhold it.¹ As the formal object or motive of religious faith is the infallible authority of God, it would be irrational, and therefore sinful, to doubt anything that is contained in divine Revelation.

“The faithful,” says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, “can have no doubt touching those things of which God, who is truth itself, is the author. Hence we understand how great is the difference between this faith which we have in God, and that which we yield to the writers of human history.”²

To doubt a doctrine which cannot stand the test of reason, either because it is not proposed by

¹ Cfr. John Rickaby, S.J., *First Principles of Knowledge* (Stonyhurst Series), p. 44.

² *Cat. Rom.*, P. I, c. 1, qu. 1: “Nulla fidelibus potest accidere dubitatio in iis, quorum Deus auctor

est, qui est ipsa veritas. Ex quo intellegimus, quantum inter hanc fidem, quam Deo habemus, intersit et illam, quam humanae historiae scriptoribus adhibemus.”

legitimate authority, or because all or some part of it is contradictory, is morally licit. Consequently, doubt is not forbidden *per se*, that is, not every kind of doubt is sinful, but there is a doubt that is reasonable and permissible.

A distinction must therefore be drawn between *speculative doubt* (also called theoretical or negative) and practical or positive doubt. The former has its origin in the intellect. When it is not directed against the substance of a revealed truth, but merely against the form in which that truth is couched, or against the arguments alleged in its support, or when it questions whether the dogma under consideration is really revealed by God or not, doubt is no sin, but rather a legitimate weapon against credulity, superstition, and intellectual sloth, and may prove an incitement to penetrate more deeply into the teaching of religion. When, on the other hand, a man harbors doubts against a truth of which he knows that, because proposed by the Church, it is surely contained in divine Revelation, he commits a sin, either of heresy or of infidelity.

Practical or positive doubt arises from the heart. It is the state of mind of him who, in the words of Jesus Christ, *will* not believe because he loves darkness rather than light.³ This kind of doubt is the product of a corrupt heart

³ John III, 19.

and logically leads to a denial of the faith and, in the end, to infidelity. "He that is of God, heareth the words of God; therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God." ⁴

There is a third species of doubt which is to be regarded as a temptation and is not sinful so long as the mind withholds assent. This form of quasi-doubt is sometimes a trial inflicted by God, sometimes the result of natural causes, physical or intellectual, and sometimes the product of carelessness, pride, self-conceit, or the sign of a secret repugnance to the truths of faith. It should be treated like scrupulousness, to which it is related. ⁵

2. HERESY.—Heresy (*αἵρεσις*, from *αἰρεῖσθαι*, to choose) is error repugnant to the faith, pertinaciously held (*error pertinax*) by one who professes the Christian religion. It may be *negative* or *positive*. Negative heresy implies a denial of, or refusal to accept, a truth proposed by the Catholic Church; positive heresy asserts as a revealed truth something which the Church does not teach as such.

⁴ John VIII, 47; XVIII, 37; Rom. III, 4; IV, 19-22; 1 Thess. V, 21; Tit. II, 2.—*Conc. Vatic.*, Sess. III, c. 3.—St. Anselm, *De Fide Trin.*, c. 2: *Nullus quippe christianus debet disputare, quomodo, quod catholica Ecclesia corde credit et ore confitetur, non sit, sed semper eandem fidem indubitanter tenendo, amando et secundum illam vivendo humiliter, quantum potest, quaerere rationem, quomodo sit.*

Si potest intellegere, Deo gratias agat; si non potest, non immittat cornua ad ventilandum, sed submittat caput ad venerandum." (Migne, P. L., CLVIII, 262).

⁵ See this Handbook, Vol. I, pp. 199 sqq.—Cfr. F. Hense, *Die Versuchungen*, 3rd ed., pp. 237 sqq.; C. Krieg, *Wissenschaft der Seelenleitung*, Vol. I, Freiburg 1904, pp. 242 sqq.

Heresy, again, may be internal or it may be external. It is internal (*haeresis interna*) if held purely as a matter of conviction; external (*haeresis externa*) if expressed in words or manifested by deeds.⁶

Formal heresy involves rebellion against God and is a very grievous sin because it destroys the foundation of the means of salvation. "A man that is a heretic," says the Apostle, "after the first and second admonition, avoid, knowing that he, that is such a one, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment."⁷ "To have erred," declares St. Augustine, "is human; pertinaciously to persevere in error is diabolical."⁸

Material heresy (*haeresis materialis*) is the error of those who do not pertinaciously reject the teaching of the Church, but err in good faith, *i. e.*, sincerely desirous of knowing the truth. This kind of heresy is sinful only when the error is inexcusable. A non-Catholic who is in good faith and believes that he has the true religion, lives in a state of excusable error. If serious doubts arise in his mind concerning the

⁶ Cfr. Acts XXIV, 5; XXVI, 5;
1 Tim. I, 3; VI, 2; 2 John X; Gal.
I, 6-9; Tit. I, 11.—St. Thomas,
Summa Theol., 2a 2ae, qu. 11, art.
1.

⁷ Tit. III, 10 sq.

⁸ *Serm.*, 164 (al. 22, *De Verbis*

Apost.), c. 10, n. 14: "*Humanum fuit errare, diabolicum est per animositatem in errore manere.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 901).—Cfr. A. Seitz, *Die Heilsnotwendigkeit der Kirche*, pp. 83 sqq.

truth of what he believes, he is bound to enquire, and if his enquiry results in the conviction that the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ, he must give up his erroneous belief, else his heresy will cease to be material and become formal. For every honest man is obliged to renounce, both internally and externally, a religion which he recognizes as false and to accept that which his conscience tells him is true. He who knowingly persists in religious error incurs the condemnation of Christ, who says: "He that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also will be ashamed of him, when He shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."⁹

A heresy is never formal, or grievously sinful, if it involves no real error against the faith (*positivus assensus falsi seu dissensus veri*), or if the holder is not a professed Christian, or the error is not deliberate and pertinacious.¹⁰ Involuntary error or error based upon ex-

⁹ Mark VIII, 38; cfr. John XII, 48.

¹⁰ Cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, l. XVIII, c. 51, n. 1: "Haeretici [sunt], qui sub vocabulo christiano doctrinae resistunt christianae." (Migne, P. L., XLI, 612). —IDEM, *Epist.*, 43 (al. 162), c. 1, n. 1: "Qui sententiam suam, quamvis falsam atque perversam, nulla pertinaci animositate defendunt, praesertim quam non audacia praesumptionis suae pepererunt, sed a seductis atque in errorem lapsis parentibus acceperunt, quaerunt au-

tem cauta solitudine veritatem, corrigi parati, quum invenerint, nequaquam sunt inter haereticos deputandi." (P. L., XXXIII, 160). —IDEM, *De Gestis Pelagii*, c. 6, n. 18: "Interest quantum, interest unde, interest postremo utrum admonitus corrigat an pertinaciter defendendo etiam dogma faciat, quod levitate, non dogmate dixerat. Quum igitur omnis haereticus consequenter et stultus sit, non autem omnis stultus continuo est appellandus haereticus." (P. L., XLIV, 351). —IDEM, *De Anima*, l. III, c. 15, n. 23: "Haec

cusable ignorance is not even venially sinful. The distinctive mark of formal heresy, therefore, is wilful and obstinate rejection of a Catholic dogma. Hence the declaration of sincere Catholic writers: "I may err, but I shall never be a heretic."¹¹

As against heretical errors, the teaching of the Church is called by St. Paul "sound doctrine" or "the sound word."¹² "Heretics," says St. Ignatius of Antioch, "are scarcely to be cured; there is one physician, . . . Jesus Christ our Lord."¹³

The chief *sources* of heresy are *ignorance* and *pride*.¹⁴ St. Augustine says that if there were no pride in the hearts of men, there would be neither heresy nor schism.¹⁵ It seems strange to have this truth confirmed by Martin

si pertinaciter singula defendantur, tot haereses facere possunt, quot opiniones esse numerantur." (P. L., XLIV, 522).—IDEM, *De Bapt. contra Donat.*, l. IV, c. 16, n. 23: "Istum nondum haereticum dico, nisi manifestata sibi doctrina catholica fidei resistere maluerit et illud, quod tenebat, elegerit." (P. L., XLIII, 169).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 5, art. 3.—A. Seitz, *Die Heilsnotwendigkeit der Kirche*, pp. 59 sqq., 89 sqq.

¹¹ Cfr. St. Celestine I, *Epist.*, 25, n. 3: "Nec ego perfidiae huic dabo nomen erroris, non est error impietas omnis." (Migne, P. L., L, 550).—*Conc. Lateran. IV.*, c. 2 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 432).—Cicero, *Phil.*, XII, 2: "Cuiusvis hominis est errare, nullius nisi insipientis in errore perseverare."—A. M. Weiss, O. P., *Lutherpsychologie*, 2nd ed., pp. 29 sq.

¹² 1 Tim. I, 10; Tit. I, 9; II, 1, 8; cfr. 2 Tim. II, 17.

¹³ *Epist. ad Ephes.*, c. 7 (Funk, *Patres Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 218, 17).

¹⁴ Cfr. Matt. VII, 15 sq.; XV, 14; XXIII, 2 sqq.; Luke VI, 39; Acts XX, 29 sq.; Col. II, 8.

¹⁵ *De Vera Religione*, c. 25, n. 47: "Quae [superbia] si non esset, non essent haeretici neque schismatici nec carne circumcisi nec creaturae simulacrorumque cultores." (Migne, P. L., XXXIV, 142).—IDEM, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 124, n. 5: "Non enim putetis, fratres, quia potuerunt fieri haereses per aliquas parvas animas. Non fecerunt haereses nisi magni homines, sed quantum magni, tantum mali homines." (P. L., XXXVII, 1652).—IDEM, *ibid.*, 134, n. 18: "Sunt docti, qui affligunt ecclesiam schismata et haereses faciendo." (P. L., XXXVII, 1750).—IDEM, *ibid.*, 106, n. 14: "Principes sunt [haeretici], docti sunt, magni sunt, lapides pretiosi sunt." (P. L., XXXVII, 1429).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 46 (al. 165, *De Temp.*), c. 8, n. 18: "Diversis locis sunt diversae sectae, sed una mater superbia omnes genuit." (P. L., XXXVIII, 280).

Luther. "Every heretic and proud man," he says in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, written while he was still a Catholic, "is first misled by ignorance of the divine truth. Then he accepts as true what seems to him to be true, and is already trapped, because he proceeds securely, as if he were true and free, beyond snares and imprisonment. In course of time he objects to everything that does not suit him and turns away his ears. Finally he gets angry and zealously defends the creatures of his brain, persecuting his opponents, slandering them, and inflicting all manner of injury upon them. The consequence is that he becomes utterly blind and cannot see what others see, and while all the rest rise up, he remains lying on the ground, defending his opinions." ¹⁶

3. INFIDELITY.—By infidelity (*ἀπίθεια*, *infidelitas*) we mean an absolute lack of faith in the Christian religion.

a) If this lack of faith arises from invincible ignorance, it is called *negative* and is no sin, but merely an evil or a penalty of sin. If, on the other hand, infidelity arises from unwillingness to know or accept the truths of Revelation (*infidelitas positiva*), it is *per se* sinful. "If I had not come and spoken to them," says our Divine Saviour, "they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." ¹⁷

¹⁶ Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, fol. 241^b, *apud* Denifle, *Luther und Luther-tum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 478.

¹⁷ Johr XV, 22.—Cfr. *Prop. Damnati. Baii*, n. 68: "*Infidelitas pure negativa in his, quibus Chri-*

stus non est praedicatus, peccatum est." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1068).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 10, art. 1: "*Infidelitas dupliciter accipi potest: uno modo secundum puram negationem, ut dicatur infidelis ex hoc solo, quod*

Positive infidelity, as a rule, amounts to more than mere negation; it opposes to the true faith, which it rejects, some false doctrine of its own invention. Its sources are *ignorance*, *pride*, *sensuality*, and *malice*.¹⁸ The degree of sinfulness involved in each case is to be measured by the gravity of the underlying cause.

The sinfulness of infidelity may be judged from what has been said above¹⁹ on the necessity of faith. The subjective guilt involved in each case varies according to the degree of consciousness and pertinacity with which the truth is rejected and is objectively graver if it disfigures the truths it denies.²⁰

Infidelity is really the most grievous of all sins

non habet fidem; alio modo potest intellegi infidelitas secundum contrarietatem ad fidem, quo scilicet aliquis repugnat auditui fidei vel etiam contemnit ipsam, et in hoc proprie perficitur ratio infidelitatis, et secundum hoc infidelitas est peccatum. Si autem accipiatur secundum negationem puram, sicut in illis, qui nihil audierunt de fide, non habet rationem peccati, sed magis poenae, quia talis ignorantia divinorum ex peccato primi parentis consecuta est."

18 Cfr. Luke XVI, 27-31; John III, 19 sq.; V, 44-47; VIII, 42-47; X, 24-26; Eph. IV, 17-19; 1 Tim. I, 19 sq.—P. Segneri, *Incredulus non Excusabilis*, Dillingen 1696.—A. Guyot, *Les Causes de l'Incredulité*, 6th ed., Paris 1904.—A. Kirchberger, *Der Unglaube und die Vernunft*, Ravensburg 1907.—Pohle-Preuss, *God: His Knowability*,

Essence, and Attributes, 4th ed., St. Louis 1921, pp. 52 sq.

19 *Supra*, pp. 6 sqq.

20 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 10, art. 3: "*Omne peccatum formaliter consistit in aversione a Deo. Unde tanto aliquid peccatum est gravius, quantum per ipsum homo magis a Deo separatur. Per infidelitatem autem maxime homo a Deo elongatur, quia nec veram Dei cognitionem habet, per falsam autem cognitionem ipsius non appropinquat ei, sed magis ab eo elongatur. Nec potest esse, quod quantum ad quid Deum cognoscat, qui falsam opinionem de eo habet, quia id, quod ipse opinatur, non est Deus. Unde manifestum est, quod peccatum infidelitatis est maius omnibus peccatis, quae contingunt in perversitate morum. Secus autem est de peccatis, quae opponuntur aliis virtutibus theologicis."*

because by it a man departs farther than by any other sin from God, who is man's last end.²¹ The terrible consequences of unbelief are variously described in Holy Writ. "He that believeth not shall be condemned;"²²—"He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;"²³—"If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sin;"²⁴—"The wrath of God cometh upon the children of unbelief,"²⁵ etc.

b) There are various forms of infidelity.

a) *Indifferentism* (*latitudinarismus*), or carelessness in religious matters, based upon the assumption that all religions, or at least all Christian denominations, are equally true or equally false (theoretical indifferentism),²⁶ or sloth in the fulfilment of the duties imposed by religion (practical indifferentism).²⁷

β) *Eclecticism*, so called, *i. e.*, the arbitrary se-

²¹ St. Augustine, *Tr. in Ioa.*, 89, n. 1: "*Magnum quoddam peccatum, non omne peccatum, quasi sub generali nomine vult intellegi. Hoc est enim peccatum, quo tenentur cuncta peccata, quod unusquisque si non habeat, dimittuntur ei cuncta peccata.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXV, 1856).

²² Mark XVI, 16.

²³ John III, 36.

²⁴ John VIII, 24; XII, 48; Rom. XI, 20.

²⁵ Col. III, 6; Heb. III, 18; Apoc. XXI, 8.

²⁶ 2 Cor. VI, 14-16.—Encyclical of Pius IX, Dec. 9, 1846: "*Huc*

spectat horrendum ac vel ipsi naturali rationis lumini maxime repugnans de cuiuslibet religionis indifferentia systema, quo isti veteratores, omni virtutis et vitii, veritatis et erroris, honestatis et turpitudinis sublato discrimine, homines in cuiusvis religionis cultu aeternam salutem assequi posse comminiscuntur, perinde ac si ulla unquam esse posset participatio iustitiae cum iniquitate aut societas lucis ad tenebras et conventio Christi ad Belial." (*Syllab. Error.*, n. 15-18; Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1715 sqq.).

²⁷ Apoc. III, 15 sq.

lection from the body of religious or philosophical truths presented by the Church of certain doctrines and combining them into a system:

γ) *Scepticism*, which regards uncertainty or doubt as the product of reflection and the normal state of the human mind, and thereby completely renounces the knowledge of truth;

δ) Formal or positive *atheism* in its various forms (Pantheism, Materialism, Naturalism, Rationalism), all of which agree in rejecting God and divine Revelation.²⁸

All these forms of unbelief are grievously sinful, though the personal guilt of individual unbelievers is often diminished by the influence of a wrong or defective training, by the power of deeply rooted prejudices or lack of proper instruction.

The reason why so many refuse to accept divine Revelation is not that they think too deeply, but that they do not think deeply enough. It is often asserted that a thorough training in the natural sciences (now-a-days called "Science" *par excellence*) destroys religious conviction. But this claim is untrue and can be easily refuted by the example of the many great scientists who have openly professed belief in God and the existence and knowability of miracles.²⁹

²⁸ Pii IX. Syllab. Error., n. 1-14 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1701 sqq.).—J. Engert, *Der naturalistische Monismus Hückels*, Vienna 1907, pp. 208 sqq., 247 sqq.—W. Monod, *Aux Croyants et aux*

Athées, 2nd ed., Paris 1910.—G. Grupp, *Jenseitsreligion*, Freiburg 1910, pp. 41, 95.

²⁹ K. A. Kneller, *Das Christentum und die Vertreter der neueren Naturwissenschaft*, 2nd ed., Frei-

To solve the problem offered to the human mind by miracles we must try to view them from the viewpoint of Almighty God rather than from our own limited coign of vantage. Miracles are not detached phenomena, but parts of a wonderful system of government. They are wrought by the same God who has conceived and created the universe. This is the true metaphysical harmony. "To the Lord was his own work known from the beginning of the world."³⁰

Why should the chemist, the physicist, the botanist, the zoölogist, the meteorologist, the astronomer, the anthropologist, the physician or the technician be hindered in his work by accurate notions of God, the world of spirits, the human soul, or the origin, purpose, and end of man? In every field of scientific research there have been and are eminent men who have not only preserved, but deepened and strengthened their religious faith. He who proclaims religion and science to be irreconcilable merely proves that he is ignorant of the true meaning of dogma, the real significance of religious ceremonies, and the authentic interpretation of the mysteries of faith. Unfortunately, those who have achieved eminence in some branch of science as a rule devote little or no time to the study of religion. A learned mind needs more than the elementary instruction imparted in the catechism.

burg 1904 (tr. by T. M. Kettle, *Christianity and the Leaders of Modern Science*, St. Louis 1911). Father Kneller brings overwhelming evidence to show how the real leaders of scientific thought are forced to recognize, if not always the truth of revealed religion, at least that of the groundwork on which it rests. See also the three volumes of James J. Walsh's excellent work, *Catholic Churchmen in*

Science, Philadelphia, The Dolphin Press, 1913 sqq.—G. Sortais, *La Providence et le Miracle*, Paris 1905.—E. Dennert, *Vom Sterbelager des Darwinismus*, 6th ed., Stuttgart 1905 (English tr., *At the Deathbed of Darwinism*, by E. V. O'Hara and J. H. Peschges, Burlington, Iowa, 1904); C. Gutberlet, *Vernunft und Wunder*, Munich 1905.

³⁰ Acts XV, 18.

Religion, like science, has its technical literature, and its representatives are ready to explain and defend whatever the Church teaches. Those who attack the Christian religion usually have but a vague notion of its sources and methods, even though they constantly harp on the need of original research and critical acumen in their own chosen field. Now he who neglects or refuses to devote serious study to philosophy and theology, has no right to draw philosophical or theological conclusions from the data furnished by natural science. To do so is to mistake the essence of religion, which, though it may be practiced by all, even the most ignorant, can be scientifically demonstrated only by those properly equipped for the task. Theology, like every other science, must be studied from its own sources and by its own methods, though, of course, there are many points of contact between it and the natural sciences. Thus the law of causation, the teleological principle, the laws of nature, and other data furnished by natural science lead the mind almost imperceptibly and with a kind of elemental necessity from the contemplation of the results of empirical research to religious speculation and a study of the supernatural.

4. SCHISM (*σχίσμα*) technically denotes a formal separation from the unity of the Church, and in this sense is not a direct antithesis of faith. But experience teaches that a state of pure schism, *i. e.*, schism without heresy, cannot continue long, at least in the case of a large number of men. St. Jerome says: "Schism, at the beginning, may be understood as something different from heresy, but there is no schism which does not

invent for itself some heresy, in order to justify its secession." ³¹

5. APOSTASY (*ἀποστασία*) is of three kinds.

a) Apostasy from the faith (*apostasia a fide*) ³² implies formal abandonment of the religion of Christ, coupled with the profession of some anti-Christian system (Judaism, Moham-medanism, paganism).

b) Apostasy from ecclesiastical obedience (*apostasia ab ordine*) is committed by a Catholic who wilfully and contumaciously sets at nought the authority of the Church.

c) Apostasy from religious profession or from Holy Orders (*apostasia a religione*) is the sin of those who without permission abandon the religious order in which they are professed, or, after having received major orders, renounce the clerical profession and return to the dress and customs of the world.

Essentially, all three kinds of apostasy consist in abandoning or denying the truths of Revelation and embracing a religious system opposed to Christianity. Wilfully and contumaciously to abandon the Catholic faith is a sin against the Holy Ghost.³³ A Catholic can never have a le-

³¹ In *Tit.*, c. 3, quoted by St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 39, art. 1.

³² *Thess* II, 3; 1 *Tim.* IV, 1

sq.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 12.

³³ *Heb.* VI, 4-6; X, 26-29; 2 *Pet.* II, 21. See this Handbook, Vol. II, pp. 91 sqq.

gitimate reason for leaving his Church.³⁴ "There is no parity," declare the Fathers of the Vatican Council, "between the condition of those who have adhered to the Catholic truth by the heavenly gift of faith, and of those who, led by human opinions, follow a false religion; for those who have received the faith under the teaching of the Church, can never have any just cause for changing or doubting that faith."³⁵ Sacred Scripture attributes apostasy from the faith to the Devil, who is the author of evil and the father of lies. False apostles, says St. Paul, "are deceitful workmen, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ, and no wonder, for Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light."³⁶

6. CREDULITY (*temeraria credulitas*, in opposition to *pious credulitatis affectus*) means proneness to believe without sufficient evidence. In matters pertaining to faith and morals credulity is immoral because it runs counter to reason. The Catholic Church admonishes all men to scrutinize carefully whatever is offered in the name

³⁴ Prop. Damnat. sub Innocentio XI., n. 20: "Hinc potest quis prudenter repudiare assensum, quem habebat, supernaturalem." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1170).

³⁵ Conc. Vatican., Sess. III, c. 3: "Minime par est conditio eorum, qui per caeleste fidei donum catholicae veritati adhaeserunt, atque eorum, qui, ducti opinionibus hu-

manis, falsam religionem sectantur, illi enim, qui fidem sub Ecclesiae magisterio susceperunt, nullam unquam habere possunt iustam causam mutandi aut in dubium fidem eandem revocandi." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1794).

³⁶ 2 Cor. XI, 13 sq.; cfr. Gal. V, 7 sq.

of religion without the warrant of divine authority.³⁷ Credulity leads to superstition, "the twin-sister of unbelief," or at best to an emotional pietism without true religious conviction and genuine faith.

It is charged that Christianity demands a sacrifice of the intellect (*sacrificium intellectus*). This is true in a sense, and could not be otherwise, as Christianity is a divinely revealed religion. However, the Church does not demand blind obedience, but merely "a reasonable service,"³⁸ which enables the believer to say with the Apostle: "I know whom I have believed."³⁹ Ours is an enlightened faith, which fills us with joy and confidence and gives us the strength which we need to perform our duties. The ideal state of the soul is as far removed from credulity as from scepticism. He who believes too readily is as easily deceived as he who deliberately shuts his mind to the truth.

Because of the importance of the true faith, the Church has taken special precautions to keep it pure. These precautions are embodied mainly in the organization

³⁷ Matt. VII, 15; Rom. XII, 1; 1 Thess. V, 21; 1 Pet. III, 15; 1 John IV, 1.—St. Augustine, *De Utilitate Credendi*, c. 11, n. 25: "*Credere tunc est culpandum, quum vel de Deo indignum aliquid creditur, vel de homine facile creditur.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 83).—St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, I, n. 2: "*Sicut rectus ordo exigit, ut pro-*

funda christianae fidei credamus, priusquam ea praesumamus ratione discutere, ita neglegentia mihi videtur, si, postquam confirmati sumus in fide, non studemus, quod credimus intellegere." (*P. L.*, CLVIII, 362).

³⁸ Rom. XII, 1; cfr. 2 Cor. X, 5.

³⁹ 2 Tim. I, 12.

against evil literature which is generally called the Index, and consists of three parts—preventive censorship, the prohibition of books, and the Index itself. The consideration of these measures belongs more particularly to Canon Law, and we will therefore confine ourselves to a few necessary remarks towards the end of this volume.⁴⁰

READINGS.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 28 sqq.—Ern. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., Vienna 1887, pp. 37 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., Barcelona 1918, pp. 186 sqq.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, New York 1908, pp. 174 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., Freiburg 1910, pp. 236 sqq.

On doubt and skepticism in religious matters: J. L. Balmes, *Cartas a un Eseptico*, Barcelona 1851 (English tr., *Letters to a Sceptic*, Dublin 1875).—F. Hettinger, *Apologie des Christentums*, Vol. I, 9th ed (edited by E. Müller), pp. 5 sqq.; in English under the title, *Natural Religion*, London 1890.—B. Kuhn, *Formes Actuelles du Doute*, Bruxelles 1906.—P. Jäger, *Zur Überwindung des Zweifels*, Tübingen 1906.—L. J. Walker, S.J., art. "Scepticism," in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, pp. 516 sqq. (See also the literature cited in Pohle-Preuss, *God: His Knowability, Essence, and Attributes*, 4th ed., St. Louis 1921, p. 54).—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 35 sqq.

On heresy: J. Wilhelm in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. VII, pp. 256–262.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 369–374.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., Barcelona 1918, pp. 187 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 30 sqq.

On infidelity: P. Segneri, *Incredulus non Excusabilis*, Dillingen 1696.—A. Guyot, *Les Causes de l'Incrédulité*, 6th ed., Paris 1904.—Ch. H. Vosen, *Das Christentum*, 5th ed. (by S. Weber), Freiburg 1905, pp. 46 sqq.—A. Kirchberger, *Der Unglaube und die Vernunft*, Ravensburg 1907.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 378–390.

⁴⁰ *Infra*, pp. 399 sqq.

On schism: St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 39.—J. Forget in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, pp. 535-539.

On apostasy: *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 1325, § 2; can. 1064; can. 1240, § 1, n. 1; can. 644, §§ 1, 2; can. 645, § 2; can. 2385.

On credulity: A. Van Hove, in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 624.

CHAPTER II

HOPE

SECTION I

NATURE, OBJECT, AND NECESSITY OF HOPE

I. NATURE OF HOPE.—Hope is an act of the will by which we desire to possess God, and firmly trust that through His goodness and fidelity we shall obtain Him, together with the necessary means, both natural and supernatural, of reaching Heaven.¹

Hope, therefore, may be either a transient act or a permanent habit (*habitus*). Both as an act and as a habit it has two essential constituents, namely, the effective desire of salvation and a firm trust in the promises and the providence of God. This twofold note distinguishes

¹ Rom. VIII, 24 sq.; Heb. XI, 1.—Cfr. Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, III, dist. 26, n. 1: "*Est spes virtus, qua spiritualia et aeterna bona sperantur, id est, cum fiducia exspectantur. Est enim spes certa exspectatio futurae beatitudinis, veniens ex Dei gratia et meritis praecedentibus, vel ipsam spem, quam naturâ praeit caritas, vel rem speratam, id est, beatitudinem*

aeternam. Sine meritis enim aliquid sperare, non spes, sed praesumptio dici potest." (Migne, P. L., CXCII, 811).—IDEM, *Com. in Epist. ad Rom.*, c. 5, 2-5: "*Spes est certa exspectatio futurae gloriae, quae humanae rationi vana videtur, sed testimonio virtutis, id est patientiae vel miraculorum firmatur.*" (P. L., CXCI, 1380).

the Christian virtue of hope from resignation or apathy on the one hand, and, on the other, from presumption, which is an inordinate confidence of attaining Heaven without using the prescribed means.²

a) Through these two constituents of desire and trust, hope, though essentially distinct from faith and charity, is intimately united with both—with faith, because it is based on belief in God and shares its motives and object; with charity, because hope without the love of God would be fruitless and ineffective.³ “Charity flows from faith,” says St. Ambrose, “and hope from charity, and together they flow back and forth as in a sort of holy intercourse.”⁴ And St. Augustine: “Hope is impossible without charity. . . . Hence charity cannot exist without hope, nor hope without charity, nor either of the two without faith.”⁵ And in another place: “He who does not love, believes in vain, even though his belief is true, and hopes in vain, even though

² 1 Pet. V, 6–10.

³ Luke VIII, 47–50; Rom. V, 1–5; XV, 13; 1 Cor. XIII, 13; Eph. III, 12; Col. I, 4 sq.; Heb. VI, 19 sq.; XI, 1.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 7, can. 12.

⁴ *Expos. Evang. sec. Luc.*, l. VIII, n. 30: “*Ex fide caritas, ex caritate spes, et rursus in se sancto quodam circuitu refunduntur.*” (Migne, P. L., XV, 1774).

⁵ *Enchiridion*, c. 8: “*Quid spe-*

rari potest, quod non creditur? Porro aliquid etiam, quod non speratur, credi potest. Quis namque fidelium poenas non credit impiorum? Nec sperat tamen. . . . Iam de amore quid dicam, sine quo fides nihil prodest? Spes vero esse sine amore non potest (Jas. ii, 19). . . . Proinde nec amor sine spe est, nec sine amore spes, nec utrumque sine fide.” (Migne, P. L., XL, 234).

the things he hopes for appertain to real happiness. . . .”⁶

b) Hope, being on the one hand an indestructible natural tendency and, on the other, a virtue supernaturally infused by God, may by practice become an acquired virtue and thereby truly moral. Its *de facto* object lies in the future, since eternal beatitude cannot be fully realized in the present life. Patient resignation to the will of God here on earth, with a view to eternal happiness in Heaven, demands a moral effort and entails sacrifices which not infrequently assume heroic proportions.

St. Paul calls Christ “the hope of glory”⁷ and says that God glorified us in Him; but he adds: “Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then you

⁶ IDEM, *ibid.*, c. 117: “Quum quaeritur, utrum quisque sit homo bonus, non quaeritur, quid credat aut speret, sed quid amet. Nam qui recte amat, procul dubio recte credit et sperat; qui vero non amat, inaniter credit, etiamsi sint vera, quae credit, inaniter sperat, etiamsi ad veram felicitatem doceantur pertinere, quae speret: nisi et hoc credat et speret, quod sibi petenti donari possit, ut amet.” (P. L., XL, 286).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 17, art. 6: “Virtus aliqua dicitur esse theologica ex hoc, quod habet Deum pro obiecto, cui inhaeret. Potest autem aliquis alicui inhaerere dupliciter: uno modo propter seipsum, alio modo in quantum ex eo in aliud

devenitur. Caritas ergo facit hominem Deo inhaerere propter seipsum, mentem hominis uniens Deo per affectum amoris. Spes autem et fides faciunt hominem inhaerere Deo sicut cuidam principio, ex quo aliqua nobis proveniunt. De Deo autem provenit nobis et cognitio veritatis et adeptio perfectae bonitatis. Fides ergo facit hominem Deo adhaerere, in quantum est nobis principium cognoscendi veritatem; credimus enim ea vera esse, quae nobis a Deo dicuntur. Spes autem facit Deo adhaerere, prout est in nobis principium perfectae bonitatis, in quantum scilicet per spem divino auxilio innititur ad beatitudinem obtinendam.”

⁷ Col. I, 27.

shall also appear with him in glory.”⁸ The higher life of the Christian believer, therefore, whilst he sojourns in this vale of tears, is subject to manifold hindrances, which will not disappear entirely until Christ reveals to us His hidden glory in Heaven.

To this consideration may be added another. No man is certain that he will reach Heaven. God has created us, but He will not save us, without our coöperation. No one is crowned unless he has fought the good fight, and only those obtain eternal life who have kept the commandments, abstained from mortal sin, or purged themselves from it if they had the misfortune to fall. Hence our ultimate fate depends upon how we wage war against the enemies of our soul, and we must “work out our salvation with fear and trembling.”⁹ This explains why Sacred Scripture warns men against inordinate confidence and exhorts them to strive unceasingly for sanctification by performing good works. In this terrific struggle Christian hope proves itself a moral virtue, supernatural both in origin and substance, founded solely upon “the word of the truth of the gospel.”¹⁰

⁸ Rom. VIII, 30; Col. III, 3 sq.

⁹ Matt. VII, 21 sq.; 1 Cor. VI, 9; Phil. II, 12; 1 Pet. I, 17; 1 John II, 3-6; Apoc. XXI, 27.—Peter Lombard, *Com. in Ep. ad Rom.*, c. 5: “Non est magnum glo-

riari in laetis; recti corde etiam in tribulationibus gloriantur, magnitudinem præmii cognoscentes, de tribulatione finienda infinitum præmium acquisituri. (Migne, P. L., CXCI, 1379).

¹⁰ Col. I, 5; cfr. 1 Cor. X, 12;

2. THE OBJECT OF HOPE.—The material object (*objectum materiale*) of hope is Heaven, *i. e.*, the beatific vision of God, and the means that are necessary to obtain it. Some writers distinguish a primary and a secondary object. The primary object is God,¹¹ whereas the secondary object are the graces,—natural and supernatural, spiritual and physical,—which He grants for the purposes of salvation.¹²

The primary *formal* object of hope is God, in so far as He is the Sovereign Good and, as such, capable of satisfying the human heart, and be-

2 Pet. I, 10.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 13, can. 15, 16.

11 Gen. XV, 1; Tob. II, 16-18; John XIV, 1-3; Tit. III, 7; 1 John II, 25.—St. Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, l. XXII, c. 30, n. 1: "*Praemium virtutis erit ipse [Deus], qui virtutem dedit eique se ipsum, quo melius et maius nihil possit esse, promisit.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XLI, 801).—*IDEM*, *Tr. in Ioa.*, III, n. 21: "*Noli ad praemium diligere Deum, ipse sit praemium tuum.*" (*P. L.*, XXXV, 1405).—*IDEM*, *Enarr. in Ps.*, LXXIX, n. 14: "*Tu [Deus] eris totum praemium iustificatorum.*" (*P. L.*, XXXVI, 1028).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 17, art. 2: "*Spūs, de qua nunc loquimur, attingit Deum, innitens eius auxilio ad consequendum bonum speratum. Oportet autem effectum esse causae proportionatum. Et ideo bonum, quod proprie et principaliter a Deo sperare debemus, est bonum infinitum, quod proportionatur virtuti Dei adiuvantis, nam infinitae virtutis est proprium ad infinitum bonum perdu-*

cere. Hoc autem bonum est vita aeterna, quae in fruitione ipsius Dei consistit. Non enim minus aliquid ab eo sperandum est, quam sit ipse, quum non sit minor eius bonitas, per quam bona creaturae communicat, quam eius essentia. Et ideo proprium et principale objectum spei est beatitudo aeterna."

12 Matt. VI, 9-13, 33; 1 Tim. IV, 8.—St. Augustine, *Enchirid.*, c. 114: "*De iis omnibus, quae fideliter sunt credenda, ea tantum ad spem pertinent, quae oratione dominicā continentur.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 285).—*IDEM*, *ibid.*, c. 115: "*Apud evangelistam Matthaeum septem petitiones continere dominica videtur oratio, quarum tribus aeterna poscuntur, reliquis quatuor temporalia, quae tamen propter aeterna consequenda sunt necessaria.*" (*P. L.*, XL, 285).—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelect. Dogmat.*, Vol. VIII, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1900, pp. 205 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, 4th ed., St. Louis 1921, pp. 3 sqq.

cause He has promised us eternal salvation for the sake of Jesus Christ; in other words, God's infinite goodness towards us, His omnipotence, and His fidelity to His promises.¹³ Secondary motives are the merits acquired through His grace, which are not fruits of human righteousness, but free gifts of God,¹⁴ and the intercession of the Saints or of our fellowmen; for in all these things the hope of the Christian is directed medi-

¹³ Acts IV, 12; Rom. IX, 32; Eph. I, 19 sq.; II, 4-7; Phil. I, 6; 2 Tim. I, 12; Heb. VI, 17 sq.; X, 23; 1 Pet. I, 3; V, 7.—St. Augustine, *De Trinit.*, l. XIII, c. 10, n. 13: "*Quid tam necessarium fuit ad erigendam spem nostram, . . . quam ut demonstraretur nobis, quanti nos penderet Deus quantumque diligeret? Quid vero huius rei tanto isto indicio manifestius atque praeclarius, quam ut Dei Filius . . . naturae nostrae dignatus [sit] inire consortium?*" (Migne, P. L., XLII, 1024).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 18, art. 4, ad 2: "*Spes non innititur principaliter gratiae iam habitae, sed divinae omnipotentiae et misericordiae, per quam etiam qui gratiam non habet, eam consequi potest, ut sic ad vitam aeternam perveniat. De omnipotentia autem Dei et misericordia eius certus est quicumque fidem habet.*"—Cfr. Ph. Kneib, *Die "Lohnsucht" in der christlichen Moral*, Vienna 1904, pp. 7 sqq.

¹⁴ *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 16: "*Absit, ut christianus homo in se ipso vel confidat vel gloriatur, et non in Domino, cuius tanta est erga omnes homines bonitas, ut eorum velit esse merita, quae sunt*

ipsius dona."—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 194 (al. 105), c. 5, n. 19: "*Quod est meritum hominis ante gratiam, quo merito percipiat gratiam, quum omne bonum meritum nostrum non in nobis faciat nisi gratia, et quum Deus coronat merita nostra, nihil aliud coronet quam munera sua?*" (Migne, P. L., XXXII, 880).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 170 (al. 49, *De Temp.*), n. 10: "*Quum hinc exieris, reciperis pro meritis et resurges ad recipienda, quae gessisti. Tunc Deus coronabit non tam merita tua, quam dona tua.*" (P. L., XXXVIII, 932).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 333, n. 5 (P. L., XXXVIII, 1466); *Confess.*, l. IX, c. 13, n. 34 (P. L., XXXII, 778); *Enarr. in Ps.*, 98, n. 8 (P. L. XXXVII, 1246); *ibid.*, 144, n. 11 (P. L., XXXVIII, 1876); *ibid.*, 126, n. 4: "*Nemo habet aliquid boni, nisi ab illo acceperit, qui solus bonus est.*" (P. L., XXXVII, 1670).—On the Catholic doctrine of supernatural merit see Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, pp. 397 sqq.; P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, Dublin 1918, pp. 47 sqq., G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, London and New York 1920, pp. 158 sqq.

ately to God Himself, or to Christ, who is "the one mediator between God and men."¹⁵

3. NECESSITY OF HOPE.—a) Hope is a necessary means of salvation for all who have attained the use of reason. Hope corresponds to an elemental need of human nature. "We are saved by hope," says St. Paul,¹⁶ and Christ Himself demands trust and confidence in God as an indispensable condition for the forgiveness of sins.¹⁷ The sinner must hope (*actualiter*) in order to prepare himself for justification, and after he has been justified, he must hope (*habitualiter*) in order to obtain the grace of prayer and to persevere and grow in the favor of God.

The Church has condemned the opinion that perfect charity excludes hope.¹⁸ This condemnation is in entire harmony with Holy Scripture, which admonishes us again and again to have unlimited confidence in the omnipotence, the goodness, and the mercy of God.¹⁹

b) In proportion to the necessity of hope is the duty of cultivating this virtue, keeping it alive

¹⁵ 1 Tim. II, 5; cfr. Heb. XII, 24; Jas. V, 16 sqq.—H. Denifle, O.P., *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 400 sqq.—K. Krogh-Tønning, *Der letzte Scholastiker*, Freiburg 1904, p. 209.—On Christ as the Mediator of mankind see Pohle-Preuss, *Soteriology*, 3rd ed., St. Louis 1919, pp. 5 sqq.; on the intercession of the Saints, Pohle-

Preuss, *Mariology*, 3rd ed., St. Louis 1919, pp. 142 sqq.

¹⁶ Rom. VIII, 24.

¹⁷ Matt. IX, 22, 28-30; Luke XVIII, 42.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 6 and 7.

¹⁸ *Prop. Damnatae sub Innoc. XI.*, n. 1 and 23 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1327, 1349).

¹⁹ Ps. IV, 6; Matt. XI, 12; Heb. X, 23.

and nourishing it in the soul. Innumerable are the passages in which the Bible exhorts us to hope in God and confide in His mercy.²⁰ However, it is not necessary to make explicit acts of hope, except in times of special temptation against this virtue.²¹ The most effective means of preserving and increasing hope are prayer, meditating on the divine goodness and fidelity, eliciting frequent acts of this virtue, and thanking God for the favors He confers upon us.²² The Church specially recommends the frequent and confident invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is the refuge of sinners and the help of Christians.²³

READINGS.—Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, III, dist. 16.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 17 sq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, Paris 1905, pp. 396-400.—H. Noldin, S.J. *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 47-54.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 240-247.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., pp. 55-64.—F. Abert, *S. Thom. Aqu. Compend. Theol.*, pp. 457 sq., 461 sqq., 472 sqq.—G. Mayer, *System der christl. Hoffnung*, Leipsic 1900.—J. B. Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., Barcelona 1918, pp. 192 sqq.—Thos. Slater,

20 Ps. XXVI, 14; Luke XII, 32; John XIV, 1; 1 Tim. VI, 17; Heb. X, 35.—Cfr. *Prop. Damnat. ab Alex. VII.*, n. 1 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1101).

21 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 186.

22 Ps. XXIV, 2 sqq.; Matt. VI, 25 sqq.; Luke XV, 11 sqq.; Rom. V, 1 sqq.; VIII, 23 sqq.; Phil. I, 6.

23 "Refugium peccatorum," "Auxilium Christianorum" (Litany of

Loreto).—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 188: "Remedia desperationi opposita praecipua sunt sequentia: 1. consideratio bonitatis et misericordiae infinitae Dei; 2. frequens recordatio maximorum peccatorum, qui veniam consecuti sunt; 3. Meditatio parabolarum sancti evangelii, praesertim ovis perditae; 4. devotio specialis ad B. Virginem, refugium peccatorum; 5. fiducia in Christum pro nobis cruci affixum, etc."

A Manual of Moral Theology, Vol. I, pp. 177 sq.—G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, London and New York 1920, pp. 80 sqq.—P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, Dublin 1918, pp. 28 sqq.

SECTION 2

QUALITIES AND FRUITS OF HOPE

I. THE QUALITIES OF HOPE.—The qualities of hope flow from the twofold nature of this virtue as a desire and as a firm trust or confidence in the mercy of God.

a) The desire must (α) correspond in a measure to the desirability of its object, which is God, and consequently must exceed the desire for every earthly good. (β) It must be effective, *i. e.*, combined with the firm purpose of fulfilling the conditions necessary to attain eternal salvation. (γ) It must be well-ordered, *i. e.*, aim at nothing but what is in accord with the will of God, and extend to temporal goods only in so far as they are necessary, or at least useful, for the attainment of Heaven.¹

b) The confidence or trust that is an essential constituent of hope, is founded on faith in Jesus Christ, and must consequently be (α) firm and steady,² and (β) illumined by the truths of religion, especially the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, and therefore expecting no temporal

¹ Cfr. Matt. V, 6; VI, 33; Col. III, 1; 1 Tim. IV, 10; Heb. VI, 11 sq.

² Ps. XXIV, 2; 1 Cor. XV, 58; Eph. III, 12; Heb. VI, 19 sq.; 1 Pet. I, 13.

blessing except in connection with, and in relation to, the "one necessary thing," *i. e.*, eternal salvation.³ Finally, (γ) the hope that is founded in Christ will be "an anchor of the soul, sure and firm"⁴ only if confident trust in God is united with humility and diffidence in one's own powers.⁵ "He who hopes and does not fear," says Pseudo-Augustine, "is careless, but he who fears and does not hope is weighed down and descends into the depths like a stone."⁶

2. THE FRUITS OF HOPE.—The fruits of hope as a theological virtue are the following:

a) In regard to the desire which it contains, (α) the conception of Heaven as our true home, and of life on earth as an exile which we must always be ready to leave;⁷ (β) moderation in the use of earthly goods, which, compared with the one thing necessary, *i. e.*, the kingdom of God and its justice, must appear to the Christian merely as something superadded;⁸ and (γ) the

³ Matt. VI, 33; Col. III, 1; 1 Tim. VI, 17.

⁴ Heb. VI, 19.

⁵ Ps. CXLVI, 11; 1 Cor. X, 12; Phil. II, 12.

⁶ Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm. X ad Fratres in Eremito*: "Eia ergo, fratres mei, hanc [spem] amate, hanc tenete, non tamen sine timore; quia qui sperat et non timet, negligens est, qui autem timet et non sperat, depressus est et descendit in profundum quasi lapis." (P. L., XL, 1253).

⁷ 2 Cor. V, 6-8; Phil. I, 23; III, 20; Col. III, 1 sq.; Heb. XIII, 14; cfr. John XIV, 2.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, CXLVIII, n. 4: "*Peregrini suspiramus, captivati adhuc sub onere et sarcina corporis mortalis, unde adhuc gemimus in peregrinatione, exsultabimus autem in patria. Qui autem non gemit peregrinus, non gaudebit civis, quia desiderium non est in illo.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVII, 1940).

⁸ Matt. VI, 36; Phil. IV, 11 sq.; 1 Tim. VI, 6-8.

salutary fear of losing Heaven, which gains strength in proportion to the ardor with which we desire to be united to God.

b) In regard to the confidence which it inspires, hope produces (α) true contentment and that heavenly joy which comforts man in all temptations, tribulations, and difficulties;⁹ (β) patience, which, though it does not exclude complaints and other manifestations of natural pain,¹⁰ consists in a readiness to bear the adversities of life with resignation to the will of God, nay to delight in suffering and thank God for it in the firm conviction that "to them that love God all things work together unto good."¹¹ This persevering patience, when it has developed into absolute resignation to, or conformity with, the will of God, is a sure sign of election. "He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved."¹² "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath

⁹ Deut. X, 19; Rom. XV, 13; 1 Cor. I, 3 sqq.; Phil. II, 1; 1 Thess. IV, 12; Heb. VI, 18.—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 158, n. 8: "*Spes iam non erit, quando res erit. Etenim ipsa spes peregrinationi necessaria erit. Viator enim, quando laborat ambulando, ideo laborem tolerat, quia pervenire sperat. Tolle illi spem perveniendi, continuo franguntur vires ambulandi. Ergo et spes, quae hic est, ad iustitiam pertinet peregrinationis nostrae.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 866).—St. Ber-

nard, *Serm. in Cant.*, 61, n. 3: "*Peccavi peccatum grande; turbabitur conscientia, sed non perturbabitur, quoniam vulnerum Domini recordabor.*" (P. L., CLXXXIII, 1072).

¹⁰ "*Est quaedam flere voluptas.*" —Cfr. Matt. XXVI, 38 sq.; XXVII, 46; John XI, 35.—Ovid, *Trist.*, IV, 3, 37.

¹¹ Rom. VIII, 28; cfr. Matt. V, 11 sq.; XXVI, 39; Acts V, 41; Rom. V, 3 sqq.

¹² Matt. X, 22,

been proved, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him." ¹³

Three things, in the terse phrase of a famous Italian writer, lead us blind mortals to misjudge the ways of God: *corta vita, corta vista, corta pazienza*—i. e., the shortness of life, our limited vision, and impatience.¹⁴

READINGS.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 400–403.—G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, p. 81 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 49 sqq.

¹³ Jas. I, 12.

¹⁴ Antonio Rosmini.—Cfr. St. Gregory the Great, *Hom. in Evang.*, l. I, 3, n. 4: "*Quodsi perfecte agimus [nosmetipsos vincimus], non solum imminentes poenas evademus, sed una cum martyribus gloriâ munerabimur. Nam quamvis occasio persecutionis desit, habet tamen et pax nostra martyrîum suum, quia etsi carnis colla ferro non subdimus, spirituali tamen gladio carnalia desideria in mente trucidamus.*" (Migne, P. L., LXXVI, 1089).—IDEM, *ibid.*, l. II, 35, n. 7: "*Sed quia natalem martyris hodierna die colimus, fratres mei, nequaquam*

nos a virtute eius patientiae existimare extraneos debemus. Si enim adiuvante nos Domino virtutem patientiae servare contendimus et in pace Ecclesiae vivimus, et tamen martyrii palmam tenemus. Duo quippe sunt martyrii genera, unum in mente, aliud in mente simul et actione. Itaque esse martyres possumus, etiamsi nullo percutientium ferro trucidemur. Mori quippe a persequente martyrîum in aperto opere est, ferre vero contumelias, odientem diligere, martyrîum est in occulta cogitatione." (Migne, P. L., LXXVI, 1263).

SECTION 3

SINS AGAINST HOPE

Man sins against the theological virtue of hope either by wilfully entertaining an aversion for God and heavenly things or by confiding in Him either too much or too little.

1. *Aversion for God* is not the same as hatred of God. The latter is a sin against charity rather than against hope. To have an aversion for God means not to wish Him evil, but simply to prefer the earth and its attractions to Him and to the happiness He has prepared for His rational creatures. To do this is obviously a mortal sin.

In this connection theologians discuss the question whether it is a mortal sin to wish that this terrestrial life might last forever. Noldin says that if this wish is accompanied by a disposition to leave Heaven to God, provided He will give us the earth, it is a mortal sin against hope because by entertaining such a desire the creature turns away from the Creator and seeks its happiness in created things. If, however, it is merely a sign of excessive absorption in earthly pleasures, or of fear of death on account of the

uncertainty of reaching Heaven, it is not necessarily a mortal sin against hope because such a disposition of mind does not *per se* exclude the desire of beatitude. Married people who say that they would like to live together forever, as often as not merely mean to give utterance to the ardor of their mutual affection.¹

2. Against the confidence that forms an essential constituent of hope we may sin either by excess (*per excessum*) or by defect (*per defectum*).

We sin by excess of hope,

a) If we entertain *presumption*, which is an inordinate confidence of being able to attain Heaven without employing the necessary means. This may manifest itself in a twofold manner:

a) By tempting God. "*Tentatio Dei*" is a Biblical term² which denotes the expectation of extraordinary divine help or miraculous intervention when there is no legitimate reason for it. The term may also be applied to anything that is done with the purpose of eliciting such help, as, for example by ordeals (*ordalia*) or so-called divine judgments (*iudicia divina*),³ which are

¹ N. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., p. 55.

² Ex. XVII, 7; Deut. VI, 16; Ps. LXXVII, 18; Is. VII, 12; Matt. IV, 7; Acts XV, 10.

³ See, however, A. Lehmkühl, S.J., *Theologia Moralis*, Vol. I, 11th ed., p. 250, n. 1: "*Attamen si miraculosus quidem Dei interventus exspec-*

tatur in causa salutis aeternae, inest sane in hac expectatione vel postulatione inordinatio quaedam contra spem theologicam; verum haec confundi non debet cum ipsa Dei tentatione. Quae et latius patet, quum committatur in quacumque re si sine iusta causa talis interventus Dei postuletur, et ex se con-

based on the belief that God, being just and all-powerful, will, if solemnly invoked by public authority, rather work a miracle than allow his rational creatures to be unjustly punished or to escape punishment when guilty of a serious crime. This belief is contrary to the revealed truth that God's distributive justice does not work itself out fully in this world.⁴

β) We further sin by presumption if we harbor the inordinate confidence that, no matter what we do, we shall get to Heaven, because it lies entirely with God not only to call men to eternal beatitude but to enable them to obey the call.⁵ This is what theologians call *praesumptio salutis*.

stituit malitiam graviores."—Gury (I, n. 273) says: "*Tentatio Dei est petitio et exspectatio a Deo alicuius effectus insoliti et praeter rerum ordinem positi. Certum est tentationem Dei formalem et expressam semper esse peccatum mortale contra religionem. . . . Si autem sit implicita tantum, saepe esse potest peccatum veniale tantum ob ignorantiam, inadvertentiam aut materiae parvitatem. . . . 1. Gravior peccat contra religionem, qui innocentiam suam probare postulat duello, ferro candenti etc., vel qui ad martyrium ultro se offert, nisi bonâ fide aut divinâ inspiratione excusetur. 2. Item qui magno mortis periculo se exponit sine iusta causa, auxilio divino fretus. Si vero temeritate tantum agat, quin divinae providentiae confidat, non peccat contra religionem, sed tantum contra quantum decalogi praeceptum. 3. Leviter tantum pec-*

cat, qui in morbo levi relictis remediis sperat a Deo sanitatem; quia ibi non est gravis deordinatio. Immo ab omni culpa excusatur, si speret, se naturaliter Deo iuvante a tali levi morbo liberatum esse. 4. Item peccat venialiter per se, qui ex negligentia imparatus accedit ad praedicandum Dei verbum, sperans a Deo speciale auxilium."—On ordalia, etc., see A. Franz, *Das Rituelle von St. Florian*, Freiburg 1904, pp. 180 sqq.; IDEM, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter*, Vol. II, pp. 307 sqq.; E. Vacandard, *Etudes de Critique et d'Histoire Religieuses*, 2nd ed., Paris 1906, pp. 204 sqq.; J. P. Kirsch in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, pp. 276 sqq.

⁴ John III, 17.

⁵ Phil. II, 12 sq.—Gury (I, n. 185): "*Praesumptio . . . est inordinata fiducia beatitudinis obtinendae mediis a Deo non ordinatis.*"

Its wrongness lies in seeking certainty of salvation in conditions other than those prescribed by the Christian religion.⁶

This sin assumes different forms according to the character of the sects that encourage it. Thus theologians speak of a *praesumptio lutherana*, a *praesumptio calviniana*, a *praesumptio pelagiana*, and a *praesumptio pia*, or, more correctly, *pietistica*. The Lutherans base their presumption upon the theory that salvation depends solely on the confidence a man has (*fides fiducialis*) in the grace of God and the merits of Jesus Christ, *i. e.*, on faith alone (*sola fides*) without good works.⁷ The Calvinists believe in absolute

⁶ St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I. III, n. 21.—Gury, I, 187: "Quot modis committatur peccatum praesumptionis? Praecipue 1° praesumendo obtinere vitam aeternam propriis viribus; 2° eam exspectando sine labore, ex sola Dei misericordia; 3° peccando ob spem veniae facile a Deo obtinendae; 4° perseverando in peccato ob spem conversionis in morte."—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 13 (al. 94, *De Temp.*), n. 2: "Haec est summa eruditionis: Servite Domino in timore et exultate ei cum tremore (Ps. ii, 11). Exulta ei, non tibi: ei a quo es, quod es, et quod homo es, et quod iustus es, si tamen iam iustus es. Si autem putaveris, quod ab illo quidem homo es, a te autem iustus es, non servis Domino in timore et exultas ei in tremore, sed tibi in praesumptione. . . . Iam enim videris tibi iustus non rapiendo alienum, non adulterando, non homicidium

faciendo, non falsum testimonium adversus proximum dicendo, patrem et matrem honorando, unum Deum colendo, idolis et daemonibus non serviendo: de hac via peribis, si tibi ista praesumpseris, si tibi ista a te ipso esse putaveris. . . . Quid ergo faciendum est, ne pereamus de via iusta? 'Beati omnes, qui confidunt in eo' (Ps. ii, 13). Si beati, qui confidunt in eum, miseri, qui confidunt in se. 'Maledictus' enim 'omnis homo, qui spem suam ponit in homine' (Jer. xvii, 5). Ergo nec in te, quia et tu homo es. Si enim spem tuam posueris in alio homine, inordinate humilis eris; si autem spem tuam posueris in te, periculose superbus. Quid autem interest? Utrumque perniciosum, nihil horum eligendum. Inordinate humilis non levatur, periculose superbus praecipitatur." (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 107).

⁷ Rom. III, 28; Jas. II, 14 sqq.—

predestination.⁸ The Pelagians held that man can work out his eternal salvation without the aid of supernatural grace.⁹ A certain class of

Conc. Trident., Sess. VI, can. 9—15.—B. Bartmann, *St. Paulus und St. Jakobus über die Rechtfertigung*, Freiburg 1897, pp. 140 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, pp. 274 sqq.

⁸ Cfr. *Conc. Arausic.* II, c. 25 (epilog.): "*Aliquos ad malum divinâ potestate praeordinatos esse, non solum non credimus, sed etiam, si sunt, qui tantum malum credere velint, cum omni detestatione illis anathema dicimus.*"—A. Zahn, *Über den biblischen und kirchlichen Begriff der Anrechnung*, Amsterdam 1899.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, pp. 152 sqq.

⁹ Rom. X, 3; 1 Cor. X, 12.—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 196 (al. 200), c. 2, n. 7: "*His [Rom. x, 3] similes sunt, qui, quum profiteantur se esse christianos, ipsi gratiae Christi sic adversantur, ut se humanis viribus divina existiment implere mandata, ac si etiam ipsi ignorantes Dei iustitiam et suam volentes constituere iustitiae Dei non sunt subiecti et non quidem nomine, sed tamen errore iudaizant. Hoc genus hominum capita sibi invenerat Pelagium et Coelestium, impietatis huius assertores acerrimos.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIII, 893).—IDEM, *Confess.*, IV, c. 16, n. 31: "*Firmitas nostra quanto tu [Deus] es, tunc est firmitas; quum autem nostra est, infirmitas est.*" (P. L., XXXII, 706).—On the Pelagian heresy see Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, pp. 82 sqq. On the prevalence of the same error at the present day see G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, London 1920, pp. 65 sqq. Father Joyce says: "The idea that a man's soul is disabled, and

that in order to resist temptation he needs a new force infused into him, is, outside the Catholic Church, almost forgotten. Religion is reduced to the recognition of God's sovereignty and the observance of a certain standard of morality; but it is not supposed that there is anything in this beyond the scope of our natural powers. The idea that man comes into the world spiritually crippled, and that the religion of Jesus Christ can remedy his ills simply because it communicates to him a new principle of life, has disappeared. What, for instance, is the view taken of Baptism by the vast majority of our fellow-countrymen? It is probably true to say that by most non-Catholics it is at most held to secure to the recipient a certain external favor on God's part. Many, certainly, regard it as strictly obligatory by reason of Christ's command. Yet even they do not consider that the rite confers any internal gift, and would very likely dismiss as absurd the idea that the child who dies unbaptized must remain for ever deprived of the beatitude conferred on those who have received that sacrament. There is no mystery as to the source of these errors. They have their origin in a reaction against the false teaching of the Protestant Reformers. Luther and Calvin grossly exaggerated the effects of original sin. They declared that it had so vitiated and corrupted human nature, that fallen man is incapable of the smallest good. Indeed, according to Luther, even after justification, every act that man performs is stained with sin. The justified are saved, not

Pietists make salvation depend on mere "ortho-

because they are delivered from sin, but solely by the imputation to them of Christ's merits. A teaching so manifestly false could not but provoke a reaction. Experience teaches us plainly enough that fallen man is not wholly destitute of virtue: that even bad men are capable, from time to time, of good and generous actions. Hence it is no matter of surprise that those who have been brought up to believe that this travesty of Christian teaching is the teaching of Scripture as to human nature, should in preference accept the solution of Rationalism and deny original sin altogether. But when sanctifying grace and original sin are both gone, what remains of Christianity is hardly distinguishable from pure and simple Pelagianism. One of the most marked features of this modern view of religion is the almost universal acceptance of the principle that one religion is as good as another. This is not looked upon as a matter admitting of argument or discussion. It is assumed as one of those self-evident truths which are beyond dispute: and the fact that Catholics deny it is regarded as a standing proof of their wrongheadedness. It is accepted equally by the sincerely pious and by those who are wholly indifferent to religious motives. The pious appeal to it as justifying their charitable hopes for the salvation of all. There are, they say, many roads to heaven: we must not condemn those who are not travelling along the same road as ourselves. The indifferent find in it an adequate excuse for the neglect of all religion. So indubitable does the principle appear to the modern Protestant, that nothing is commoner than to hear the

opinion expressed that foreign missions are the most futile of enterprises. Why, it is asked, can we not leave the Mohammedan to serve his God in his own way? A sincere Mohammedan is just as likely to be saved as any Christian: to start a religious propaganda in a Moslem or pagan country may cause much political trouble, and can do no good to anyone. It is, of course, manifest that if the Christian religion has nothing more to offer to its adherents than a somewhat clearer knowledge of the moral law than is to be found in other creeds, there is much to be said for the objection. It might reasonably be doubted in that case, whether it is worth while to disturb the rooted beliefs of a nation in order to confer on it the problematic benefit of Christianity. Far better, it would seem, to try to induce them to observe the law which they already acknowledge as divine. The preaching of a new faith, even though it propose a higher ideal, may well cause more harm by the unsettlement to which it must give rise, than it will do good. But in fact this new form of belief, is, as we have urged, not Christianity at all. It may be said without irreverence that it would not have been worth while for God to become incarnate and die upon the Cross, to give man a gift such as that. The true religion of Jesus Christ does not consist simply in an example of the perfect fulfilment of the law. It is a stupendous gift to our race—the transformation of our nature by grace, the elevation of man to the high dignity of a child of God. It alone comes from God, and it alone can bring man to eternal beatitude. All other religions are

doxy.”¹⁰ All these theories are false and pernicious.

What is ordinarily called presumption has its origin in a sinful life inspired by the confident expectation that God will not punish sin, or at least will grant the sinner an opportunity to repent before death. This is a crime against the Holy Ghost, because, as St. Thomas says, “by presuming thus a man removes or despises the assistance of the Holy Spirit, whereby he is withdrawn from sin.”¹¹ Presumption is not, however, always the inspiring motive of such seemingly presumptuous conduct. Father Noldin says:

the work of human imagination, and are powerless to save us. The Catholic missionary goes out to heathen countries knowing that he brings with him a boon that is beyond all price. Were the result of his life's work but to make a single convert, his labors would have been well spent. Without him that soul would never have obtained grace, but would have passed out of this life still in the bondage of sin: through him it has been delivered from Satan and raised to be a partaker of the divine nature. He has achieved a result of inestimable value.”

¹⁰ Gen. XVII, 10-14; Deut. X, 16 sq.; Matt. III, 8-10; XII, 50; Luke III, 8 sq.; John I, 12 sq.; VIII, 33, 39 sq.; Acts III, 25 sq.; X, 28; Rom. II, 28 sq.; VIII, 14; 1 Cor. VII, 19; 2 Cor. XI, 22; Gal. III, 2-29; V, 5 sq.; VI, 15; Eph. II, 11-22; Phil. III, 2-9; Apoc. II, 9; III, 9.

¹¹ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 21, art. 1: “*Circa spem, per quam ali-*

quis inhaeret divinae potentiae, potest per immoderantiam esse praesumptio in hoc, quod aliquis tendit in aliquod bonum ut possibile per virtutem et misericordiam divinam, quod possibile non est, sicut quum aliquis sperat, se veniam obtinere sine poenitentia vel gloriam sine meritis. Haec autem praesumptio est proprie species peccati in Spiritum Sanctum, quia scilicet per huiusmodi praesumptionem tollitur vel contemnitur adiutorium Spiritus Sancti, per quod homo revocatur a peccato.”—IDEM, *ibid.*, art. 2, ad 3: “*Peccare cum proposito perseverandi in peccato sub spe veniae ad praesumptionem pertinet, et hoc non diminuit, sed auget peccatum. Peccare autem sub spe veniae quandoque percipiendae cum proposito abstinendi a peccato et poenitendi de ipso, hoc non est praesumptionis, sed hoc peccatum diminuit, quia per hoc videtur habere voluntatem minus firmatam ad peccandum.*”

(1) To sin, or to persevere in sin, through passion or weakness, with the hope of eventually obtaining forgiveness (*cum spe*), is not presumption, because in that case the hope of forgiveness is not the motive of sin, but merely a sentiment accompanying it; as when a soldier who is leading a sinful life defers confession until his time of service expires.

(2) To sin because it is so easy to accuse oneself of repeated sins of the same species, or because the confessional is open at all times, or because it is no harder to confess many sins than one or two, is not presumption, because the real motive in such cases is not the ease with which it is possible to obtain forgiveness, but the facility of confession.

(3) To sin or persevere in sin because of the hope of forgiveness (*propter spem veniae*), *i. e.*, because God forgives many sins as readily as one, or because He will forgive sins as easily later as now, is presumptuous because the hope of forgiveness in that case is the direct motive of sin and therefore an inordinate confidence in divine mercy. However, this sin is committed but rarely because in most instances the hope of obtaining forgiveness is an occasion rather than a motive.¹²

Presumption is of itself grave (*ex toto genere suo grave*) and therefore always a mortal sin if it involves heresy or blasphemy; otherwise it admits of smallness of matter.¹³

Certain deep-seated prejudices have recently been corrected by a non-Catholic savant as follows:

"It is a Protestant prejudice . . . that the Evangelical Church alone knows what it is to struggle for certainty in regard to, and to be personally conscious of, salvation.

¹² H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 57.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Current opinion [among Protestants] entirely ignores Monasticism, which for two important branches of the Christian Church represents the ideal Christian life. In judging the Catholicism of the western world we must never forget that to St. Thomas (who advanced in this matter beyond Augustine) belongs the merit of having first discussed the question,¹⁴ 'whether man can know that he has grace,' and of having laid down certain rules by which it is possible to arrive at an empiric, though not absolute, assurance on this point."¹⁵

It has been pointed out that St. Bernard of Clairvaux speaks of "certitude" in connection with hope and charity. But the certitude he means has as little in common with the Lutheran brand as St. Bernard's theory of justification has with that of the Protestant reformers, for according to the Abbot of Clairvaux confidence in God has no justifying power, but justification flows from charity and is never absolutely certain until man has reached Heaven.¹⁶

We sin against hope *per defectum* if we have too little confidence or none at all in God and His mercy. This want of confidence may manifest itself in the form of

a) *Pusillanimity* (*pusillanimitas*), which, however, is not always an act of the will, but often

¹⁴ *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 112, art. 5: "*Utrum homo possit scire se habere gratiam?*"

¹⁵ K. Holl, *Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt beim griechischen Mönchtum*, Leipsic 1898, p. 85.—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, can. 16.—H. Schell, *Kath. Dogmatik*, Vol. III, P. 1, pp. 346 sq.

¹⁶ St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 130, n. 5: "*Portis clausis, vectibus missis nullus exit amicus, nullus intrat inimicus. Ibi veram et certam habemus securitatem, si hic non dimiserimus veritatem.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 728). Cfr. Ps. CXLVII, 12-14.—Cfr. P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, Dublin 1918, pp. 45 sq.

a mere sentiment or mood, or a temptation arising from timidity, scrupulousness, disease, lack of instruction, or momentary weakness. In such cases, though there have perhaps been manifestations of a violent grief bordering on despair, there may be little or no real guilt; nay, if these periods of mental depression are borne with Christian fortitude, they may lead to a closer union with God.

b) Want of confidence in God may manifest itself also in a feeling of *hopelessness*, owing to an overpowering realization of one's own weakness and the consciousness of being unworthy of further graces from above. This is despair in an improper sense, and is frequently only a venial sin.

Despair in the proper sense of the word (*desperatio positiva*) is a voluntary diffidence in regard to reaching Heaven and the means necessary thereto; a complete and formal surrender of trust in the promises of God and of the hope of ever breaking with sin and leading a better life.¹⁷ This utter loss of confidence in one's own strength and in the power of divine grace may spring from unbelief or from the positive con-

¹⁷ Gen. IV, 13 sq.; 2 Kings XVII, 23; Matt. XXVII, 3-5.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 40, art. 4, ad 3: "*Desperatio non importat solam privationem spei, sed importat quandam recessum a re*

desiderata propter aestimatam impossibilitatem adipiscendi."—Cfr. 2a 2ae, qu. 20, art. 1.—P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, p. 46.—Vol. II of this Handbook, pp. 94 sq.

viction that one cannot escape God's punitive justice. The disposition which leads to despair frequently arises from spiritual or mental indolence, or from excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, which may so completely ruin a man in body and mind that he loses confidence in himself.¹⁸ Thus despair, by its very nature, excludes the possibility of amendment or conversion, and is a grievous sin against the Holy Ghost,—more grievous even than presumption, first, because divine Revelation is primarily a manifestation of charity and mercy;¹⁹ second, because it is a greater injustice against God to reject His loving mercy than to disregard His justice,²⁰ and, third, because despair entails many

18 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 20, art. 4: "*Obiectum spei est bonum arduum, possibile adipiscendi vel per se vel per alium. Dupliciter potest ergo in aliquo spes deficere de beatitudine obtinenda: uno modo quia non reputat eam ut bonum arduum, alio modo quia non reputat eam ut possibilem adipisci vel per se vel per alium. Ad hoc autem quod bona spiritualia non sapiant nobis quasi bona vel non videantur nobis quasi magna bona, praecipue perducimur per hoc, quod affectus noster est infectus amore delectationum corporalium, inter quas praecipuae sunt delectationes venereae, nam ex affectu harum delectationum contingit, quod homo fastidit bona spiritualia et non sperat ea quasi quaedam bona ardua. Et secundum hoc desperatio causatur ex luxuria. Ad hoc autem, quod ali-*

quis bonum arduum non aestimet ut possibile sibi adipisci vel per se vel per alium, perducitur ex nimia deiectione; quae quando in affectu hominis dominatur, videtur ei, quod nunquam possit ad aliquod bonum relevari. Et quia acedia est tristitia quaedam deiectionis spiritus, ideo per hunc modum desperatio ex acedia generatur. Hoc autem est proprium obiectum spei, scilicet, quod sit possibile, nam bonum et arduum etiam ad alias passiones pertinent. Unde specialius oritur ex acedia. Potest tamen oriri ex luxuria ratione iam dictâ."

19 Ez. XVIII, 23, 32; XXXIII, 11-16; John III, 16; XII, 47; 1 Tim. II, 4; 2 Pet. III, 9.

20 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 21, art. 2: "*Praesumptio est peccatum, minus tamen quam desperatio, quoniam magis proprium est Deo misereri et parcere, quam*

other sins and is the proximate cause of eternal damnation.²¹

Sometimes what is called despair is a mere *motus desperationis*, essentially a temptation, and therefore not in itself a sin, and it may be made a means of exercising the soul in virtue.

Despair itself is either partial or total. It is partial if it is not entirely voluntary, and total if it is entirely voluntary. Despair is never complete or total as long as a man continues to pray, or to perform good works, or if he resumes the practice of his religion at least temporarily.

The confessor should know that despair is sometimes a consequence and sometimes a symptom of partial or total insanity.

The sacred writers of both the Old and the New Testament never tire of extolling the mercy of God, *i. e.*, His infinite love and paternal affection for men. He "shows mercy unto thousands;"²² He "is patient and full of mercy;"²³ His mercy is vast and tender beyond

punire, propter eius infinitam bonitatem; illud enim secundum se Deo convenit, hoc autem secundum nostra peccata."—Cfr. Ps. CXXIX, 7 sq.—Missale Roman., Dom. X. post Pentec.: "*Deus, qui omnipotentiam tuam parcendo maxime et miserando manifestas, multiplica super nos misericordiam tuam. . .*"—Brev. Rom., Litaniae Sanct. Omnium: "*Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, suscipe deprecationem nostram. . .*"

²¹ St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, L, n. 5: "*Peccatum cum desperatione certa mors.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 588).—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, l. II, c. 14: "*Perpetrare flagitium aliquod mors animae est, contem-*

nere poenitentiam et permanere in culpa descendere in infernum post mortem est. Ergo peccare ad mortem pertinet, desperare vero in infernum descendere." (Migne, P. L., LXXXIII, 617).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 20, art. 3: "*Si comparetur desperatio ad alia duo peccata [infidelitas et odium Dei] ex parte nostra, sic desperatio est periculosior, quia per spem revocamur a malis et inducimur ad bona prosequenda, et ideo sublatâ spe irrefrenate homines labuntur in vitia et a bonis laboribus retrahuntur.*"

²² Ex. XX, 6.

²³ Numb. XIV, 17-19.

human understanding;²⁴ He is "a God of compassion, merciful and patient;"²⁵ "as a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame;"²⁶ His "mercy is from eternity and unto eternity"²⁷ and "from generation unto generations;"²⁸ He is "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort;"²⁹ He "saves us not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to His mercy,"³⁰ and so forth. In view of these assurances no sinner need lose confidence, even though he has offended grievously and against his better knowledge,³¹ for God "spared not even His own Son, but delivered him up for us all."³²

But, though the mercy of God is infinite, we must

²⁴ Ps. LX, 8; LXVIII, 17; LXXXV, 5.

²⁵ Ps. LXXXV, 15.

²⁶ Ps. CII, 13.

²⁷ Ps. CII, 17.

²⁸ Luke I, 50; cfr. I, 54, 72, 78.

²⁹ 2 Cor. I, 3; cfr. Eph. II, 4.

³⁰ Tit. III, 5.

³¹ Is. I, 18; Ez. XVIII, 23, 32; 2 Pet. III, 9.—St. Augustine,

Enarr. in Ps., L, n. 18: "Ita plenus es [Deus] adipe misericordiae, ut ad te conversis non solum quibuslibet peccatoribus, sed etiam impiis non sit desperandum." (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 597).—IDEM, *ibid.*, n.

6: "Subveni [Deus] gravi vulnere secundum magnam medicinam tuam. Grave est, quod habeo, sed ad Omnipotentem confugio. De meo tam

lethali vulnere desperarem, nisi tantum medicum reperirem. . . . Iste David non posset dicere: 'ignorans feci' (1 Tim. I, 13). Non enim ignorabat, quantum mali esset

contractatio coniugis alienae et quantum malum esset interfectio mariti nescientis et nec saltem irascentis.

Consequuntur ergo misericordiam Domini, qui ignorantes fecerunt, et qui scientes, consequuntur non qualemlibet misericordiam, sed magnam misericordiam." (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 588).—IDEM, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 36, 3, n. 11: "Usque adeo de ceteris desperandum non est, ut nec de ipso desperem, quamdiu vivit. De nullo enim vivente desperandum est." (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 370).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 351 (al. inter Hom. 50), c. 5, n. 12: "Quidquid feceris, quaecunque peccaveris, adhuc in vita es, unde te Deus omnino, si sanare nollet, auferret. Cur ergo ignoras, quia patientia Dei (Rom. ii, 4) ad poenitentiam te adducit?" (P. L., XXXIX, 1548).

³² John VIII, 32; cfr. John III, 16; Rom. III, 25; 1 John IV, 9 sq.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 5, n. 17: "Hoc est invictissimum scutum, quo repellitur inimicus desperationem salutis suggerens multitudinem tribulationum et tentationum." (Migne, P. L., XXXVII, 89).

not abuse it or act with presumption, for, like mercy, "wrath quickly cometh from Him, and His wrath looketh upon sinners. Delay not [therefore] to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day, for His wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance He will destroy thee." ³³

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 20 sq.—Billuart, *De Spe*, art. 5.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, lib. III, n. 20 sq.—Sporer-Bierbaum, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 341 sqq.—Ad. Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 409 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 54 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 247 sqq.—P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, Dublin 1918, pp. 28 sqq.

³³ Ecclus. V, 7-9; cfr. Ps. CII, 8, 18; Ecclus. XVI, 12 sq.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 144, n. 11: "Noli ergo dicere: Cras me convertam, cras Deo placebo, et omnia hodierna et hesternae dimittuntur mihi. Verum quidem dicis, quia Deus conversioni tuae indulgentiam

promisit, sed dilationi tuae diem crastinum non promisit." (Migne, P. L., XXXVII, 1877).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 20, n. 1: "Dicat anima, quae peccavit (cor mundum in me creavit Deus, etc. Ps. L, 12), ne plus pereat desperando, quam se perdidit delinquendo." (P. L., XXXVIII, 138).

CHAPTER III

CHARITY

SECTION I

NATURE, MOTIVE, AND OBJECT OF CHARITY

I. NATURE OF CHARITY.—a) Charity (*caritas theologica sive divina*) is a supernaturally infused virtue, by which we love God as the Sovereign Good, above all else, for His own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves.¹ This definition is nominal rather than real, but it clearly indicates the cause, the object, and the motive of the theological virtue of charity.

In the phraseology of the Church and of the Schoolmen a distinction is made between charity (*caritas*) and

¹ John XV, 9; Rom. V, 5; VIII, 15; Gal. IV, 6; 1 John IV, 7-16.—St. Augustine, *De Doctr. Christ.*, l. III, c. 10, n. 16: *Caritatem voco motum animi ad fruendum Deum propter ipsum et se atque proximo propter Deum, cupiditatem autem motum animi ad fruendum se et proximo et quolibet corpore non propter Deum.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIV, 72).—Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacram.*, l. II, p. 13, c. 6: "*Geminam nobis S. Scriptura caritatem commendat, Dei videlicet et*

proximi. Caritatem Dei, ut sic ipsum diligamus, ut in ipso gaudeamus. Caritatem proximi, ut sic ipsum diligamus, non ut in ipso, sed ut cum ipso gaudeamus in Deo. Hoc est, ut Deum diligamus propter se ipsum, proximum autem propter Deum. Deus autem idcirco propter se ipsum diligendus est, quia ipse est bonum nostrum. Proximus autem ideo propter Deum diligendus est, quia cum ipso in Deo est bonum nostrum." (P. L., CLXXVI, 528).

love (*amor*). *Amor* is the more general term, embracing all kinds of love, whereas *caritas* signifies either God Himself, the immediate and proximate object of theological charity,² or the act by which He loves us,³ or that by which we love Him,⁴ or, more commonly, the supernatural habit or theological virtue of charity.⁵ The Scholastics speak of *amor concupiscentiae*, but never of *caritas concupiscentiae*, of *amor vitiosus*, but never of *caritas vitiosa*, of *amor naturalis*, but never of *caritas naturalis*.⁶

b) To understand the nature of supernatural or theological charity we must study the analogous sentiment of natural love (*amor*). Love may be directed either to persons or to inanimate objects (temporal possessions, honor, etc.) and comprises (α) a knowledge of the object to which it is directed and pleasure in that object (*amor complacentiae*); (β) a desire for, or tendency towards, that object on account of its goodness or desirability (*amor concupiscentiae*), and (γ) a surrender of one's own personality to the person or object loved (*amor benevolentiae sive amicitiae*).⁷

These three forms of natural love are analogous to the three stages in which charity, or the love of God, our Sovereign Good, unfolds itself

² I John IV, 8, 16.

³ Jer. XXXI, 3; Rom. V, 8 sq.;

⁴ Cor. V, 14; Eph. II, 4; I John IV, 10, 16, 19.

⁵ Rom. VIII, 35, 39.

⁶ Rom. V, 5; I Cor. XIII, 13; 2

Cor. XIII, 13; Gal. V, 22; Phil. I, 9; 2 Thess. I, 3; I Tim. I, 5.

⁷ Cfr. K. Martin, *Lehrbuch der kath. Moral*, 5th ed., p. 350.

⁸ Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, Ia 2ae, qu. 26, art. 3 sq.

towards us. In both cases the higher stages of development pass beyond the lower, elevating and transfiguring, though not suppressing them. As the *amor complacentiae* and the *amor concupiscentiae* have their motive not so much in the object towards which they tend, as in the loving subject, such a love is invariably egoistic and therefore imperfect. The love of friendship alone (*amor benevolentiae sive amicitiae*) is true charity, and, if directed towards God, it is perfect, because its formal object or motive lies entirely within the person to whom it is directed.⁸

Charity or theological love has its roots in the will and is productive of good. It is therefore a virtue; nay, the highest and noblest of all virtues, superior even to faith and hope,⁹ because it imparts to all the others their tendency towards God. Therefore St. Paul aptly calls it "the fulfilling of the law,"¹⁰ "the bond of perfection,"¹¹ "the end of the commandment,"¹² i. e., the object or purpose of the Gospel. The beautiful description of charity in the first Epistle to the Corinthians¹³ is a classic of religious literature. St. Thomas refers to charity as "the root of faith and hope"¹⁴ and declares that it is the mother or form of all virtues.¹⁵ Charity endures forever, whereas faith is ultimately transformed into vision, and hope into possession.¹⁶

8 Ps. CXXXVIII, 17; Luke XII, 4; John XV, 14 sq.;—Cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 7: "*Unde homo ex iniusto fit iustus et ex inimico amicus.*"

9 1 Cor. XIII, 13.

10 Rom. XIII, 10.

11 Col. III, 14.

12 1 Tim. I, 5.

13 1 Cor. XIII, 1-3, 13.

14 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 65, art. 5, ad 2.

15 *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 62, art. 4; cfr. 2a 2ae, qu. 23, art. 3 sqq.

16 Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, pp. 390 sq.

2. THE MOTIVE OF CHARITY.—The motive or formal object of charity is God, or, more specifically, the divine attributes of goodness and amiability (*bonitas absoluta*) which are identical with His essence. Without this motive theological love could not exist. On the other hand, to love God for His own sake is more perfect than to love Him for our sake. His absolute goodness is the primary motive of charity, but it does not exclude the secondary motive of *bonitas communicativa*, i. e., the divine goodness in as much as it is communicated to men through the creation and the redemption, sanctification, and beatification of the human race, because this communication presupposes, or is the result of, absolute goodness. In matter of fact we are exhorted to love God for a variety of motives, e. g., because He is our Creator, Redeemer, and chief Benefactor, and because He has sanctified us and promised to make us forever happy in Heaven.¹⁷

3. THE OBJECT OF CHARITY.—The immediate material object (*obiectum materiale*) of charity is God Himself; its secondary and mediate object, whatever proceeds from, and is positively related to, Him. Hence love of God must be accompanied by love of fellowmen. We have no true charity unless we love our neighbor, (a) be-

¹⁷ Mark X, 45; John III, 16 sq.; — 9 sq., 19.—G. Lahousse, *Tract. de* XV, 13; Rom. V, 8–10; VIII, 32; *Virtut. Theol.*, Bruges 1900, pp. 2 Cor. V, 15; 1 John III, 16; IV, 376 sqq.

cause God commands us to love our neighbor, making obedience to this commandment the distinguishing mark of His disciples; (b) because Jesus in life and death taught us by word and example to love our fellowmen, and (c) because every human being is a child and an image of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and called unto eternal salvation.¹⁸

As for irrational creatures, to love them should cause us to love God, because they manifest His wisdom and goodness in direct proportion to their amiability.¹⁹ This also explains why habitual and unnecessary cruelty to animals is incompatible with true charity or love of God.

The love of our neighbor will be treated at

18 Matt. XXII, 37-39; 1 John IV, 12.—St. Augustine, *De Trinit.*, l. VIII, c. 8, n. 12: "*Ista contextio [1 Ioa. iv, 7, 8, 20] satis aperteque declarat, eandem ipsam fraternam dilectionem (nam fraterna dilectio est, quâ diligimus invicem) non solum ex Deo, sed etiam Deum esse tantâ auctoritate prædicari. Quum ergo de dilectione diligimus fratrem, de Deo diligimus fratrem, nec fieri potest, ut eandem dilectionem non præcipue diligamus, quâ fratrem diligimus. Unde colligitur, duo illa præcepta non posse esse sine invicem. . . . Ex una igitur eademque caritate Deum proximumque diligimus, sed Deum propter Deum, nos autem et proximum propter Deum.*" (Migne, P. L., XLII, 958).—IDEM, *De Moribus Eccles. Cath.*, l. I, c. 26, n. 48-51.

—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2æ zae, qu. 25, art. 1: "*Ratio diligendi proximum Deus est, hoc enim debemus in proximo diligere, ut in Deo sit. Unde manifestum est, quod idem specie actus est quo diligitur Deus et quo diligitur proximus. Et propter hoc habitus caritatis non solum se extendit ad dilectionem Dei, sed etiam ad dilectionem proximi.*"

19 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2æ zae, qu. 25, art. 3: "*Amicitia caritatis non potest haberi ad creaturam irrationalem. Possunt tamen ex caritate diligi creaturae irrationales sicut bona, quæ aliis volumus, in quantum scilicet ex caritate volumus eas conservari ad honorem Dei et utilitatem hominum; et sic etiam ex caritate Deus eas diligit.*"

length in the fifth volume of this Handbook, which deals with Man's Duties to His Fellowmen.

As Jesus Christ is true God, one who loves Christ as a Divine Person thereby makes an act of theological charity, and as the goodness of God nowhere manifests itself so splendidly as in the Incarnation, the Passion, and the death of our Lord, the most effective method of eliciting an act of divine charity is to meditate on the goodness which moved God to become our fellowman through His birth, our prize through His death, and our reward through His glory.²⁰

READINGS.—Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, III, dist. 27-32 (Migne, *P. L.*, CXCII, 812).—St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 27-30 (*Opera Omnia*, Vol. III, pp. 558 sqq.).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 23-24.—F. Suarez, *De Caritate*, disp. 1-6 (*Opera Omnia*, Vol. XII, pp. 634 sqq.).—S. Schiffini, S.J., *Tract. de Virtutibus Infusis*, pp. 423 sqq.—W. Lutgert, *Die Liebe im Neuen Testament*, Leipsic 1905.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 59 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 416 sqq.—A. Lehmkühl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 251 sqq.—P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, Dublin 1918.—G. H. Joyce, S.J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, London and New York 1920, pp. 82 sqq.

²⁰ Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 63.

SECTION 2

NECESSITY OF CHARITY

1. Charity, *qua* love of God, is absolutely necessary to salvation. St. John says: "He that loveth not, abideth in death,"¹ and St. Paul: "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema."² As a virtue charity corresponds to an express divine command,³ in fact, to "the greatest and the first commandment" given by Christ.⁴ The necessity of charity is, moreover, deducible from human nature itself, for, as St. Augustine says, the human heart finds no rest until it is united with God.⁵

2. Charity being necessary for salvation, its practice is a grave duty. Christ demanded of His disciples that they love Him more than their nearest kin. "He that loveth his father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me."⁶ "If any man come to me,

¹ 1 John III, 14; cfr. IV, 16.

² 1 Cor. XVI, 22; cfr. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 6 sq.

³ Deut. VI, 5.

⁴ Matt. XXII, 36-38; Mark XII, 29 sq.; Luke X, 27.

⁵ *Confess.*, l. I, c. 1: "*Fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, 661).

⁶ Matt. X, 37.

and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”⁷ The Apostles insist that we must love Christ.⁸ Now not only does our faith teach that God is the highest or sovereign Good (*summum bonum*) in every imaginable respect, but the scriptural passages cited above, and especially the wording of the first and greatest command given by Christ Himself, show that our love of God must be the highest of which we are capable. Hence it is a postulate of charity that we must love God as the infinitely lovable Being (*infinite diligibilis*) above all else, that is, more than any other person or thing.⁹ It is necessary, however, to distinguish between *amor appretiative summus* and *amor intensive summus*.

a) *Amor appretiative summus* depends on the

⁷ Luke XIV, 26.

⁸ 1 Cor. XVI, 22; Col. III, 14;

¹ John IV, 7, 16, 19; Jude 20 sq.

⁹ Matt. XXII, 37.—St. Augustine, *De Doctr. Christ.*, l. I, c. 22, n. 21: “Haec regula dilectionis divinitus constituta est, ut omnes cogitationes tuas et omnem vitam et omnem intellectum in illum conteras a quo habes ea ipsa, quae conteras. Quum autem ait, toto corde, tota anima, tota mente, nullam vitae nostrae partem reliquit quae vacare debeat et quasi locum dare ut alia re velit frui, sed quidquid aliud diligendum venerit in animum, illuc rapiatur, quo totus dilectionis impetus currit.” (Migne, P. L.,

XXXIV, 27).—IDEM, *Confess.*, l. X, c. 29: “Minus te amat, qui tecum aliquid amat, quod non propter te amat.” (P. L., XXXII, 796).—IDEM, *De Moribus Eccles. Cath.*, l. I, c. 11, n. 18: “Summum bonum, quod etiam optimum dicitur, non modo diligendum esse nemo ambigit, sed ita diligendum, ut nihil amplius diligere debeamus, idque significatur et exprimitur, quod dictum est: ex tota anima et ex toto corde et ex tota mente. Quis, quaeso, dubitaverit, his omnibus constitutis et firmissime creditis nihil nobis aliud esse optimum, ad quod adipiscendum postpositis ceteris festinare oporteat, quam Deum? Item

free determination of the will and consists in appreciating God more highly than anything else and in being ready, for His sake and for the sake of our eternal salvation, to renounce all other advantages rather than lose His grace or offend Him by a mortal sin. *Amor intensive summus* is the highest kind of emotional love of which a man is capable. It is present in the soul of one who dreads nothing more than to lose God.

b) From the very nature of these two kinds of love it follows that the former alone can be a matter of strict duty. The essential and decisive element in all love is the *amor effectivus*, i. e., that which manifests itself in deeds, in a strong inclination of the will towards God, a surrender of the soul to Him, obedience to His commands, zeal for His honor and the propagation of His kingdom. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them," says Christ, "he it is that loveth me."¹⁰ "If any one love me, he will keep my word."¹¹ "He that keepeth his [God's] word, in him in very deed the charity of God is perfected, and by this we know that we are in him."¹²

si nulla res ab eius caritate nos separat, quid esse non solum melius sed etiam certius hoc bono?" (P. L., XXXII, 1319).—Cfr. Gury, I, n. 191-193.

¹⁰ John XIV, 21.

¹¹ John XIV, 23 sq.

¹² 1 John II, 5; IV, 12, 17.—St.

Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 24, art. 8: "*Perfectio caritatis potest intellegi dupliciter: uno modo ex parte diligibilis, alio modo ex parte diligentis. Ex parte quidem diligibilis perfecta est caritas, ut diligatur aliquid, quantum diligibile est. Deus autem tantum*

Moreover, the pious emotions which constitute the so-called *amor affectivus* are transitory and cannot be elicited at will. We know of great Saints who were unable to banish entirely that state of spiritual dryness which mystic writers call *ariditas mentis* and which, according to their teaching, God purposely inflicts on His faithful servants in order to test their love and increase their merits. Nevertheless, every good Christian should strive with all his might to make his charity as intensive as possible, first, by ardent prayer, and second by carefully fostering the fire of divine love in his heart. We must therefore not only beware of expelling the Holy Spirit by mortal sin, or weakening His operation in us by committing venial transgressions, but frequently make acts of charity and thereby strive to increase

diligibilis est, quantum bonus est; bonitas autem eius est infinita, unde infinite diligibilis est. Nulla autem creatura potest eum diligere infinite, quum quaelibet virtus creata sit finita. Unde per hunc modum nullius creaturae caritas potest esse perfecta, sed solum caritas Dei, qua seipsum diligit. Ex parte vero diligentis tunc est caritas perfecta, quando diligit tantum, quantum potest. Quod quidem contingit tripliciter: uno modo sic, quod totum cor hominis actualiter semper feratur in Deum, et haec est perfectio caritatis patriae, quae non est possibilis in hac vita; in qua impossibile est, propter humanae vitae infirmitatem, semper actu cogitare de Deo et moveri dilectione ad ipsum. Alio modo, ut homo studium suum

deputet ad vacandum Deo et rebus divinis, praetermissis aliis, nisi quantum necessitas praesentis vitae requirit; et ista est perfectio caritatis, quae est possibilis in vita, non tamen est communis omnibus habentibus caritatem. Tertio modo ita, quod habitualiter aliquis totum cor suum ponat in Deo, ita scilicet, quod nihil cogitet vel velit, quod divinae dilectioni sit contrarium, et haec perfectio est communis omnibus caritatem habentibus."—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, Theol. Mor., l. VI, n. 442.—J. Deharbe, S. J., Die vollkommene Liebe Gottes im Gegensatz zur unvollkommenen, Ratisbon 1856.—L. Lessius, De Summo Bono, ed. H. Hurter, Freiburg i. B., 1869.

and confirm this all-important theological virtue in our hearts.¹³

How often such acts should be made depends largely on circumstances. It is certain that this duty binds all men in the hour of death, or when life is endangered, or when one, while unable to go to confession, is compelled to make an act of contrition, or in grievous temptations which cannot be overcome by other means. It is perhaps not too much to say that a man cannot progress steadily on the way of perfection unless he makes explicit acts of faith, hope, and charity at least once a day.¹⁴ However, no faithful Catholic need be anxious about this obligation if he strives to lead a good life and has a firm and constant purpose to avoid mortal sin, though all are advised to make explicit acts of charity frequently, in order that they may become more

¹³ Luke XI, 13; Rom. V, 5; Gal. V, 22; Col. I, 8; Eph. IV, 30; Phil. I, 9; 1 Thess. V, 19.—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. VI, c. 10, can. 24.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 24, art. 4-7.

¹⁴ Cfr. *Prop. Damnatae sub Innoc. XI.*, n. 5: "An peccet mortaliter, qui actum dilectionis Dei semel tantum in vita eliceret, condemnare non audemus."—*Prop. 6*: "Probabile est, ne singulis quidem rigorose quinquennis per se obligare praeceptum caritatis erga Deum."—*Prop. 7*: "Tunc solum obligat, quando tenemur iustificari et non habemus aliam viam, quâ iustificari

possumus." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1155 sqq.).—*Cat. Rom.*, P. II, c. 2, qu. 52: "Post baptismum acerrima cupiditatis pugna adversus spiritum relicta est, in quâ tamen contentione animo frangi aut debilitari christianum hominem non decet, quum Dei benignitate freti, optimâ spe niti debeamus, fore ut quotidiana recte vivendi exercitatione, quaecunque pudica sunt, quaecunque iusta, quaecunque sancta (Phil. iv, 8), eadem etiam facilia et iucunda videantur. Haec libenter cogitemus, haec alacri animo agamus, ut Deus pacis (2 Cor. xiii, 11) sit nobiscum."

closely united with God and accustomed to such acts as a preparation for death.¹⁵

The duty of fostering and promoting charity is a very important one, because charity is the very soul of the spiritual life, and without it good works, nay even miracles and extraordinary graces, would be of no effect. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not charity, I am become (as) sounding brass or clanging cymbal. And if I have (the gift of) prophecy, and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to displace mountains, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."¹⁶

Negatively, the commandment of charity forbids all, especially mortal, sins. "He who saith that he knoweth [God], and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."¹⁷

¹⁵ Gury, I, n. 193: "*Praecepto caritatis facile satisfaciunt fideles timorati, quia saepius actus caritatis eliciunt, gaudendo de perfectionibus divinis, optando ut nullus Deum offendat, ut omnes illum ament et colant atque eius mandata observent; orando devote, ut sanctificetur nomen eius, ut fiat eius voluntas; vitando peccatum, quia ipsi displicet etc. Fideles igitur non debent esse anxii de hac obligatione, si vitae christianae studeant et constanter promptam voluntatem gravia peccata vitandi retineant. Suadendum tamen est fidelibus, ut saepe explicitis caritatis actus eliciant in vita ad maiorem cum Deo coniunctionem, atque ut animus paratus sit*

ad similes actus in morte facile eliciendos."

¹⁶ 1 Cor. XIII, 1-3; cfr. XVI, 14; Col. III, 14.—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 140 (al. 120), c. 18, n. 45; "*Pietas cultus Dei est, nec colitur ille, nisi amando. Summa igitur et vera sapientia est, in praecepto illo primo [Matt. xxii, 37], ac per hoc sapientia est caritas.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIII, 577).

¹⁷ 1 John II, 4 sq.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 24, art. 12: "*Unum contrarium per aliud contrarium superveniens tollitur. Quilibet autem actus peccati mortalis contrariatur caritati secundum propriam rationem, quae consistit in hoc, quod Deus diligatur*

It goes without saying that the theological virtue of charity, both because of its nature and on account of its object, must be supernatural,¹⁸ efficacious,¹⁹ and constant.²⁰

READINGS.—G. Lahousse, *Tract. de Virtutibus Theol.*, Bruges 1900, pp. 376 sqq.—J. Deharbe, S.J., *Die vollkommene Liebe Gottes in ihrem Gegensatz zur unvollkommenen*, Ratisbon 1856.

super omnia et quod homo totaliter illi se subiciat, omnia sua referendo in ipsum. Est ergo de ratione caritatis, ut sic diligat Deum, quod in omnibus velit se ei subicere et praeceptorum eius regulam in omnibus sequi; quidquid enim contrariatur praeceptis eius, manifeste contrariatur caritati, unde de se habet, quod caritatem excludere possit."

18 Rom. V, 5.—Cfr. *Propositiones Damnat. Baii*, n. 34: "Distinctio illa duplicis amoris, naturalis videlicet, quo Deus amatur ut auctor naturae, et gratuiti, quo Deus amatur ut beatificator, vana est et commentitia et ad illudendum sacris literis et plurimis veterum testimoniis excogitata." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1034).

19 John XIV, 15, 21; 1 Cor. XIII, 4-7; 1 John III, 18; V, 3; 2 John 1 sq., 6.

20 John XV, 9 sq.; Rom. VIII, 35-39; Jude 21.—St. Augustine, *De Moribus Eccles. Cath.*, l. I, c. 11, n. 19: "Singula breviter adtendamus. Nemo nos inde separat minando mortem. Idipsum enim quo (animo) diligimus Deum, mori non potest, nisi dum non diligit Deum, quum mors ipsa sit non diligere Deum, quod nihil est aliud, quam ei quidquam in diligendo atque sequendo praeponere. Nemo inde separat pollicendo vitam, nemo enim ab ipso fonte separat pollicendo aquam. Non separat angelus, non enim est angelus, quum inhaeremus

Deo, nostra mente potentior. Non separat virtus, nam si virtus hic illa nominata est, quae aliquam potestatem in hoc mundo habet, toto mundo est omnino sublimior mens inhaerens Deo. Sin virtus illa dicta est, quae ipsius animi nostri rectissima affectio est; si in alio est, favet, ut coniungamur Deo; si in nobis est, ipsa coniungit. Non separant instantes molestiae; hoc enim leviores eas sentimus quo ei, unde nos separare moliuntur, arctius inhaeremus. Non separat promissio futurorum, nam et quidquid boni futurum est, certius promittit Deus, et nihil est ipso Deo melius, qui iam profecto bene sibi inhaerentibus praesens est. Non separat altitudo neque profundum, etenim si haec verba scientiae forte altitudinem vel profundum significant, non ero curiosus, ne seiungar a Deo, nec cuiusquam doctrina me ab eo separat, ut quasi depellat errorem, a quo nemo prorsus nisi separatus erraret. Si vero altitudine et profundo superna et inferna huius mundi significantur, quis mihi caelum polliceatur, ut a caeli fabricatore seiungar? Aut quis terreat infernus, ut Deum deseram, quem si nunquam deseruissem, inferna nescirem? Postremo quis me locus ab eius caritate divellet, qui non ubique totus esset, si ullo contineretur loco?" (Migne, P. L., XXXII, 1319).

L. Lessius, *De Summo Bono*, ed. Hurter, Freiburg i. B. 1869.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 428 sqq.—J. Mausbach, *Catholic Moral Teaching and its Antagonists*, New York 1914, pp. 223 sqq.—G. H. Joyce, S. J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, pp. 83 sqq.—H. Noldin, S. J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 64 sqq.

SECTION 3

FRUITS AND EFFECTS OF CHARITY

The fruits and effects of charity, or the forms in which this virtue manifests itself, are, broadly speaking, the twelve so-called gifts of the Holy Ghost,¹ more especially joy and peace,² a desire to be made conformable to the will of God, and zeal for His holy cause.

1. Joy in God (*amor laetitiae*) may be defined as pleasure in His presence, delight in contemplating His revelations, and the consciousness of being always an object of His omniscience and benevolent care.³

“The joy of salvation,” says Bishop Keppler, “the joy of the Saviour, whether bleeding in victorious battle against the legions of evil, or risen again amid Easter alleluias, or gloriously ascended to Heaven and reigning there; the joy of the Holy Ghost; the vision of perfect

¹ See Vol. I of this *Handbook*, pp. 280 sqq. Also W. F. Stadelman, C. S. Sp., *Glories of the Holy Ghost*, Techny, Ill., 1919, pp. 47 sqq. and G. H. Joyce, S. J., *The Catholic Doctrine of Grace*, pp. 94 sqq.

² John XV, 9-11; Rom. XIV, 17; 1 Cor. XIII, 4-7; Gal. V, 22 sqq.

—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 28-29.—P. Bürger, *Unterweisungen über die christliche Vollkommenheit*, pp. 635, 642 sqq.

³ Cfr. Phil. I, 18; 3 John 4.—P. W. von Keppler (tr. by J. McSorley), *More Joy*, St. Louis 1914.—Seneca, *Ep.*, 23, 4: “*Mihi crede, res severa est verum gaudium.*”

future joy, the reward of Heaven,⁴—all this remained as a precious legacy to the disciples, and has become the precious legacy of every one who is united to the Saviour in faith and love. The inner experience of the Apostle testifies that ‘the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but justice and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.’⁵ He names joy second among the fruits of the spirit.⁶ He proclaims as the Christian law of life: ‘Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice.’⁷ and, ‘Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts.’⁸ When the first Christian communities were organized, ‘breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart.’⁹ All the trouble, danger, and affliction which came upon the Christians in times of persecution could not cause anything more than a quasi-sadness in the midst of real permanent joy, ‘as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.’¹⁰ During centuries of the most frightful and bloody persecution, amid pain and torment, in flames and funeral pyres, in rackings and scourgings, in the darkest depths of dungeons, this indestructible joy has always kept up its exultant song.”¹¹

“The characteristic of all those who have attained to a perfect love of God,” says the most renowned of contemporary Dominican theologians, Fr. Albert M. Weiss, “is an exceptional and imperturbable happiness, a cheerfulness so surprising, so permanent, so frank and child-like, that the prejudiced children of this world are tempted to get vexed at it. . . . Whoever encounters souls of this kind, perceives from their very appearance that their condition does not depend on the world around them, but

⁴ Matt. XXV, 21; 1 Pet. I, 6-8.

⁵ Rom. XIV, 17.

⁶ Gal. V, 22.

⁷ Phil. IV, 4.

⁸ Col. III, 15.

⁹ Acts II, 46.

¹⁰ 2 Cor. IV, 10.

¹¹ Keppler-McSorley, *More Joy*, pp. 116 sq.

originates in their own spiritual depths. Their minds are not easily upset by storms, for their lives are built upon God, who is inaccessible to the disturbing influence of the elements. They have nought to fear from God; they are at peace with themselves. Why then, should they not be happy?"¹²

This joy in God and in divine things inspires reverence for His majesty (*amor reverentialis*). Freely does the faithful Christian acknowledge the majesty and sublimity of God, and gladly does he bow before Him,—not like a slave who dreads the lash, but like a child that confidently trusts in his father's kindness. "Perfect charity casteth out fear, because fear hath pain, and he that feareth is not perfected in charity."¹³

To this childlike reverence is added gratitude (*amor gratitudinis*), which consists in the joyful acknowledgement of innumerable favors received from God without any merit of our own,¹⁴ and is

¹² A. M. Weiss, O.P., *Apologie*, Vol. III, 2nd ed., p. 831; Keppler-McSorley, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

¹³ 1 John IV, 18.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, 118, 25, n. 7: "Hunc timorem, quo poena metuitur, consummata caritas foras mittit, quae non timore poenae, sed delectatione iustitiae liberos reddit. Timor namque iste, quo non amatur iustitia, sed timetur poena, servilis est, quia carnalis est, et ideo non crucifigit carnem. Vivit enim peccandi voluntas, quae tunc apparet in opere, quando speratur impunitas. Quum vero poena creditur secutura, latenter vivit, vivit tamen. Mallet enim licere et dolet

non licere, quod lex vetat, quia non spiritualiter delectatur eius bono, sed carnaliter malum metuit, quod minatur. Timore autem casto ipsa, quae hunc timorem foras mittit, peccare timet caritas, etiamsi sequatur impunitas, quia nec impunitatem iudicat secuturam, quando amore iustitiae peccatum ipsum deputat poenam." (Migne, P. L., XXXVII, 1576).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 161 (al. 18, *De Verbis Apost.*), n. 9: "Servilis timor est, quo times cum diabolo ardere, timor castus est, quo times Deo displicere." (P. L., XXXVIII, 883).

¹⁴ 2 Cor. II, 14; Eph. V, 20; Col. III, 15, 17; 1 Thess. V, 18,

combined with fear of all that runs counter to His will and regret for one's own weakness, imperfection, and sinfulness (*amor dolorosus*). If a man's individual faults are the object of this sorrow, it is called contrition; in all other cases, Christian sadness.¹⁵

2. The tendency to conform one's will to that of God (*amor oboedientiae sive conformitatis*) takes the form either of obedience or resignation, according to the manner in which the divine will manifests itself, namely, as a law or as a decree. Both obedience and resignation to the will of God must be universal and willingly rendered. However, it is no sin, but sometimes may be a proof of childlike charity, to desire that this or that particular decree of Providence be changed. Christ prayed on Mount Olivet: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt,"¹⁶—and we are allowed to follow His example.

3. Zeal for the cause of God is such a necessary requirement of true charity that the latter cannot exist without the former. This *zelus amoris* consists mainly in an earnest endeavor to prevent others from offending God, or to induce them to embrace the true faith, or to do penance

¹⁵ Matt. V, 5; Rom. XII, 15; 1 Cor. XIII, 6.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 28, art. 2.

¹⁶ Matt. XXVI, 39 sqq.

for their sins, or to lead a more perfect life. To be genuine, this zeal for souls must be free from egotistic motives, aim only at God and His glory, and employ no means except those which are legitimate in themselves or at least do not hinder the attainment of the end in view. This is but another way of saying that our zeal must be tempered with prudence and should never outrun the bounds of modesty and benevolence. Where these conditions are lacking, even the most ardent zeal is apt to injure rather than to help the cause of God.¹⁷

Legitimate means for propagating the kingdom of God are instruction, example, and intercessory prayer. To these may be added almsgiving for the purpose of rendering the poor more receptive for good advice and example. Violence and compulsion are contrary to the spirit of Christianity and therefore forbidden.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ps. LXVIII, 10; Matt. XXIII, 15; Luke IX, 51 sqq.; John II, 17; Rom. X, 2; XII, 9; 2 Cor. XI, 2; Gal. I, 14; VI, 17 sq.; 2 Tim. I, 3; Jas. I, 21.—P. Chaignon, S. J., *Le Ciel Ouvert par le Zèle*, Angers 1882 (German tr. by M. Hoffmann, *Der Seeleneifer*, Mayence 1902).

¹⁸ Epist. ad Diognet., c. 7, n. 3-5 (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 402): Ἄρά γε, ὡς ἀνθρώπων ἂν τις λογίσαιτο, ἐπὶ τυραννίδι καὶ φόβῳ καὶ καταπλήξει; οὐ μὲν οὖν ἀλλ' ἐν ἐπιεικείᾳ καὶ πραύτητι ὡς βασιλεὺς πέμπων υἱὸν βασιλείᾳ ἔπεμψεν, ὡς θεὸν ἔπεμψεν, ὡς

ἄνθρωπον πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἔπεμψεν, ὡς σώζων ἔπεμψεν, ὡς πείθων, οὐ βιαζόμενος· βία γὰρ οὐ πρόσσῃ τῷ θεῷ. Ἐπεμψεν ὡς καλῶν, οὐ διώκων· ἔπεμψεν ὡς ἀγαπῶν, οὐ κρίνων.—Tertullian, *Apol.*, c. 24: "Videte ne et hoc ad inreligiositatis elogium concurrat, adimere libertatem religionis et interdicere optionem divinitatis, ut non liceat mihi colere, quem velim, sed cogar colere, quem nolim. Nemo se ab invito coli volet, ne homo quidem." (Ed. E. F. Leopold, p. 1, 96).—IDEM, *Ad Scap.*, c. 2: "Humani iuris et naturalis potestatis est unicuique, quod puta-

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 28.—F. W. Faber, *The Creator and the Creature*, Book II.—St. Francis de Sales, *Traité de l'Amour de Dieu*.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 419 sq.—Msgr. Gay, *La Vie et les Vertus Chrétiennes*, Paris 1876, Tr. XII.

<p><i>verit colere, nec alii obest aut prod- est alterius religio. Sed nec re- ligionis est cogere religionem, quae sponte suscipi debeat, non vi, quum</i></p>	<p><i>et hostiae ab animo libenti expostu- lentur.”</i> (Ed. Leopold, p. 248).—A. Seitz, <i>Die Heilsnotwendigkeit der Kirche</i>, pp. 192 sqq.</p>
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SECTION 4

SINS AGAINST CHARITY

Mortal sin, both as an act and as a state, is diametrically opposed to the theological virtue of charity, which spells union with God, whereas mortal sin involves separation from Him.¹

As charity has various degrees, so mortal sin, which is its antithesis, may be more or less grievous.

I. HATRED AND CONTEMPT OF GOD.—Most directly opposed to charity is hatred and contempt of God.²

¹ Cfr. Prov. X, 12; Luke VII, 47; 1 Pet. IV, 8.—St. Augustine, *Tr. in Ioā.*, I, n. 6: "*Superbia extinguit caritatem, humilitas ergo roborat caritatem, caritas extinguit delicta.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 1982).—IDEM, *De Doctr. Christ.*, III, c. 10, n. 16: "*Quanto magis regnum cupiditatis destruitur, tanto caritatis augetur.*" (P. L., XXXIV, 72).—IDEM, *Enchiridion*, c. 117: "*Regnat carnalis cupiditas, ubi non est Dei caritas.*" (P. L., XL, 287).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 24, art. 10: "*Omne peccatum mortale contrariatur caritati.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, art. 12: "*Quilibet actus peccati mortalis contrariatur caritati secundum propriam rationem, quae consistit in hoc, quod Deus diligatur super omnia.*"—Cfr.

this Handbook, Vol. II, pp. 16 sqq.—P. O'Neill, *Divine Charity*, pp. 14 sqq.

² John XV, 18–25.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 34, art. 1: "*Deus dupliciter ab homine apprehendi potest: uno modo secundum seipsum, puta quum per essentiam videtur, alio modo per effectus suos [Rom. i, 20]. Deus autem per essentiam suam est ipsa bonitas, quam nullus habere odio potest, quia de ratione boni est, ut ametur, et ideo impossibile est, quod aliquis videns Deum per essentiam, eum odio habeat. Sed effectus eius aliqui sunt, qui nullo modo possunt esse contrarii voluntati humanae, quia esse vivere et intellegere est et appetibile et amabile omnibus, quae sunt quidam effectus*

Hatred of God (*odium Dei*), in its fully developed form, is the sin of the demons. In men, as a rule, it results only from an immoral life. "To hate God, the giver of all good things," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "is to sin deliberately, and this is a sin against the Holy Ghost. Hence it is evident that hatred of God is chiefly a sin against the Holy Ghost, in so far as the sin against the Holy Ghost denotes a special kind of sin: and yet it is not reckoned among the kinds of sin against the Holy Ghost, because it is universally found in every species of that sin."³

Contempt of God may be direct or indirect. Direct contempt (*contemptus formalis*) amounts to the same thing as hatred of God, whereas indirect contempt (*contemptus practicus*) is, strictly speaking, contained in every sin, because every transgression of the divine law implies a preferring of the creature to God.

2. MORAL INDOLENCE.—Opposed to the love

Dei. Unde etiam secundum quod Deus apprehenditur ut auctor horum effectuum, non potest odio haberi. Sunt autem quidam effectus Dei, qui repugnant inordinatae voluntati, sicut inflictio poenae et etiam cohibitio peccatorum per legem divinam, quae repugnant voluntati depravatae per peccatum; et quantum ad considerationem talium effectuum ab aliquibus Deus odio haberi potest, inquantum scilicet apprehenditur peccatorum prohibitor et poenarum inflictor."

³ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 34,

art. 2, ad 1: "*Odium Dei maxime est peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum, secundum quod peccatum in Spiritum sanctum nominat aliquod genus speciale peccati, ideo tamen non computatur inter species peccati in Spiritum Sanctum, quia generaliter invenitur in omni specie peccati in Spiritum Sanctum.*"—*Ibid.*, art. 5: "*Odium, quod dilectioni huic opponitur, non est primum in destructione virtutis, quae fit per vitia, sed ultimum, et ideo odium non est vitium capitale.*"

that produces good works (*amor effectivus*) is sloth or indolence (*acedia*), which we have defined in a previous volume of this Handbook⁴ as a sluggishness of the soul that makes it dread physical and mental labor in the exercise of virtue. This fault may manifest itself in neglect of prayer and other religious exercises, lukewarmness in matters pertaining to salvation, indifference to virtue and spiritual things (*desidia, inertia*), distraction and neglect of duty, libertinism, aversion to revealed truth, disgust for religion, ingratitude towards God, and lack of zeal for His holy cause.⁵

3. ZELOTRY AND BLIND FANATICISM.—Opposed to charity from still another point of view is false zeal, which employs this virtue as a cloak to hide its egotistic aims. We have in mind particularly the fanaticism of unenlightened even though well-meaning Christians, which so often hinders good causes. It is wrong to pursue selfish aims under the pretext of seeking the glory of God. Those who are guilty of such conduct may believe themselves to be actuated by genuine zeal, but they lack enlightenment and prudence.

Religious fanaticism sometimes develops into

⁴ Vol. II, p. 83.

Summa Theol., 2a 2ae, qu. 35, art.

⁵ Matt. XIII, 19; XXIV, 38; 2
Cor. VII, 10.—Cfr. St. Thomas, 1-4.

disrespect for God and hatred of those who venture to disagree with the misguided zealot. "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees," said our Divine Lord, "hypocrites, because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves."⁶ He prophesied to His disciples: "They will put you out of the synagogues, yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God."⁷ We are not permitted to hate any person in the name of religion, though we may and should hate sin, iniquity, and error. "Let love be without dissimulation," says St. Paul, "hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good."⁸ Therefore every species of pseudo-religious zeal which springs from hypocrisy, selfishness, jealousy, error, or superstition, is wrong and damnable.⁹ Only he who is animated by a pure and an ardent desire for the glory of God and the welfare of his fellowmen, can truthfully say with the Psalmist: "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."¹⁰

We sometimes hear it said that one who cannot hate is incapable of loving. There is truth in this adage.

⁶ Matt. XXIII, 15.

⁷ John XVI, 2 sq.; Rom. X, 2; Gal. I, 13 sq.; Acts VIII, 3; IX, 1; XXIII, 21; XXVI, 9; Phil. I, 15-17; 2 Tim. I, 3.

⁸ Rom. XII, 9; cfr. Luke IX, 51-56.

⁹ Cfr. Matt. VII, 3-5; XXIII, 13; Luke VI, 41 sq.; John XVI, 2; Rom. X, 2; Phil. I, 15, 17.

¹⁰ Ps. LXVIII, 10; cfr. John II, 17.

Ardent enthusiasm for what is good usually inspires implacable hatred of evil. We may and should hate evil, but we are never allowed to hate the evil-doer. The Gospel shows us Christ inveighing with holy anger against the Pharisees because they degraded God's sacred temple for their selfish purposes; but His anger is directed against their evil deeds, not against their persons as such. Thus, too, our hatred of evil should be free from personal bitterness. No matter how cordially we detest sin, we must treat those who commit it with kindness and forbearance. Moreover, it is not always easy to distinguish between good and evil tendencies; much that appears wicked in the actions of men is at bottom only immaturity or thoughtlessness.

READINGS:—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 34-35.—Sporer-Bierbaum, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 382 sqq.—Elbel-Bierbaum, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., pp. 383 sqq.—Chr. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. VII, 2nd ed., pp. 291 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 4th ed., pp. 373 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 70 sq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., pp. 82 sqq.—Suarez, *Tract. de Caritate*, disp. VI, sect. 1.—Amort, *Theol. Mor.*, tr. IX, § VIII.

B. PRAYER

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE, EFFICACY, AND OBJECT OF PRAYER

I. NATURE OF PRAYER.—Prayer (εὐχή, προσευχή, *oratio*) may be broadly defined as the act of raising the mind to God. All intelligent creatures are bound to think of God now and then and hold converse with Him in order to exercise their faith, hope, and charity.¹ This converse may be mental (*verbum mentis*) or vocal, *i.e.*, expressed in words (*verbum oris*).²

1 St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. 7: "*Fides credit, spes et caritas orant. Sed sine fide esse non possunt ac per hoc et fides orat.*" (Migne, P. L., XL, 234).—IDEM, *Epist.*, 130 (*al.* 121), c. 9, n. 18: "*In ipsa fide et spe et caritate continuo desiderio semper oramus. Sed ideo per certa intervalla horarum et temporum etiam verbis rogamus Deum, ut illis rerum signis nos ipsos admoneamus, quantumque in hoc desiderio profecerimus, nobis ipsis innotescamus et ad hoc augendum nos ipsos carius excitemus. Dignior enim sequetur effectus, quem ferventior praeceedit affectus.*" (P. L., XXXIII, 501).

2 Ps. XXIV, 1.—St. John Chrysostom, *Homil. in Gen.*, XXX, n. 5: Ἡ εὐχή διάλεξις ἐστὶ πρὸς τὸν

θεόν (Migne, P. G., LIII, 280).—St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orth.*, 1. III, n. 24: Προσευχή ἐστὶν ἀνάβασις νοῦ πρὸς θεὸν ἢ αἴτησις τῶν προσηγόντων παρὰ θεοῦ (P. G., XCIV, 1089).—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, LXXXV, n. 7: "*Oratio tua locutio est ad Deum: quando legis, Deus tibi loquitur, quando oras, Deo loqueris.*" (P. L., XXXVII, 1086).—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 250: "*Oratio latius sumpta est elevatio mentis ad Deum, seu quivis pius animae affectus in Deum et in supernaturalia. In sensu autem strictiori est petitio decentium a Deo.*"—A. Poulain, S.J., *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, 2nd ed., pp. 1 sqq.

Prayer in all its forms—adoration, praise, petition, thanksgiving—constitutes an act of divine worship, because when a man prays he honors and reveres God and acknowledges Him to be the author of all goodness. Prayer is, therefore, not merely man's voluntary acknowledgment of his entire dependence on God, but likewise the first and most immediate act of worship, and consequently an essential element of that natural religion which is found among all nations, even the most degraded savages.³

Prayer attains its highest and most perfect development in the Catholic Church, which teaches that we must "adore the Father in spirit and in truth,"⁴ and assures us that we have in Christ a Mediator through whom we shall receive whatever we ask for in His name.⁵

In Gen. IV, 26 we read that Enos, the son of Seth, "began to call upon the name of the Lord." This rather obscure text can not mean, as some pretend, that Enos invented prayer or was the first to introduce public worship. The former hypothesis is unlikely on *a priori* grounds, while the second is refuted by the fact, attested by the same holy Book, that long before Enos was born, Cain and Abel publicly "offered gifts to God." As to

³ E. v. Lasaulx, *Studien des klassischen Altertums*, Ratisbon 1854, pp. 137 sqq.; J. Döllinger, *Heidentum und Judentum*, Ratisbon 1857, pp. 199 sq., 369, 526 sq.; W. Schneider, *Die Naturvölker*, Vol. II, pp. 269 sq., 347 sqq.; C. Ausfeld, *De*

Graecorum Precationibus, Leipsic 1903.

⁴ John IV, 24.

⁵ John XV, 16; cfr. Matt. VI, 9; Mark I, 35; Luke XI, 1 sqq.; John XIV, 13 sq.; XVI, 23; Heb. V, 7; VII, 25.

what the passage *does* mean, exegetes are not agreed. Some think it marks the institution of solemn public sacrifice. Others regard it as a testimony to the ancient use of the name "Yahweh," thinking that Enos began to worship God by that name. A third group maintains that in the days of Enos the pious Sethites began to be known as children of Yahweh, in opposition to the wicked descendants of Cain, who called themselves "sons of men." The last-mentioned assumption derives plausibility from the fact that in Gen. VI, 2 the Sethites are called simply "sons of God." However, we rather incline to the opinion that Gen. IV, 26 was originally a gloss, explaining that before Enos it was forbidden to pronounce the name of God, and that this gloss, through an error made by some careless copyist, slipped into the sacred text.⁶

2. EFFICACY OF PRAYER.—Christ said: "Your Father who is in heaven, [will] give good things to them that ask him."⁷ This oft-repeated promise can have but one meaning, namely, that the right kind of prayer is sure to be heard by God. Prayer, in other words, is absolutely certain in its effects. Moreover, it strengthens man's friendly relations with God, confirms faith, invigorates hope, kindles love, enlightens the intellect, steels the will, purifies the heart, and thus disposes the soul for the fruitful reception of grace.⁸

⁶ Cfr. A. B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel*, Vol. I, Leipzig 1908, pp. 25 sq.

⁷ Matt. VII, 11; cfr. XVIII, 19 sq.; Jas. V, 16.

⁸ Ps. XLIX, 15; John XVI, 24;

Besides these general effects, prayer has a very special one, namely, to obtain for us the things for which we ask, provided, of course, we pray in the right spirit, *i.e.*, with due regard to God's honor and the salvation of souls. It is in this sense that Christ says: "All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."⁹

When St. Monica grieved for her wayward son Augustine, a bishop advised her "to pray for him to the Lord" and consoled her with the assurance: "It is impossible for a son of so many tears to be lost."¹⁰

The objections usually made against the efficacy of prayer are inspired by Pantheistic or Deistic prepossessions and cannot stand the clear white

cfr. Tertullian, *De Orat.*, c. 24: "*Sola est oratio, quae Deum vincit. . . . Oratio murus est fidei, arma et tela nostra adversus hominem, qui nos undique observat. Itaque nunquam inermes incedamus. Die stationis, nocte vigiliae meminerimus. Sub armis orationis signum nostri imperatoris custodiamus, tubam angeli expectemus orantes.*" (Ed. Leopold, P. II, 16).—St. John Chrysostom, *Homil. in Gen.*, XXX, n. 5: "Μέγα γὰρ ὄπλον ἡ εὐχή, μεγάλη ἀσφάλεια, μέγας θησαυρὸς, μέγας λιμὴν, ἄσυλον χωρίον." (Migne, P. G., LIII, 279).—Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 47 (al. 226 *de Temp.*): "*Oratio iusti clavis est caeli. Ascendit precatio et descendit Dei miseratio. Licet alta sit terra, altum caelum, audit tamen Deus hominis linguam, si mundam habeat conscientiam.*" (Migne, P.

L., XXXIX, 1838).—*Serm.*, 55 (al. 4 *ex Homil.*, 50), n. 1: "*Vere novit recte vivere, qui recte novit orare.*" (P. L., XXXIX, 1849).—On Luther's teaching concerning the efficacy of "right prayer" (*oratio vera*) see Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 109 sqq. (Eng. tr. by R. Volz, *Luther and Lutherdom*, Vol. I, Part I, Somerset, O., 1917, pp. 113 sqq.)

⁹ Matt. XXI, 22; cfr. Matt. VI, 5 sqq.; VII, 7 sq.; XVIII, 19 sq.; XXVI, 39, 42; Mark XI, 24 sq.; John XIV, 13 sq.; XV, 7, 16; XVI, 23; cfr. 1 Kings III, 18.—F. Schmid, *Die Wirksamkeit des Bittgebetes*, Brixen, 1895.

¹⁰ "*Fieri non potest, ut filius istarum lacrimarum pereat.*" St. Augustine, *Confessiones*, III, c. 12 (Migne, P. L., XXXII, 691).

light of Christian revelation.¹¹ Prayer is *not* incompatible with belief in God and the immutability of His Providence. We do *not* appeal to God to tell Him our needs, which He knows better than we, but to recall to our own minds the truth that He is the Author of all goodness and that we depend entirely on His bounty.¹² When we pray we do *not* mean to persuade God to change His eternal decrees; on the contrary, our prayers have entered into those decrees, as secondary causes, from all eternity.¹³

¹¹ Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 2.—IDEM, *Contra Gentiles*, III, c. 95 sq.—V. Cathrein, S. J., *Moralphilosophie*, Vol. II, 4th ed., pp. 36 sq.

¹² Matt. VI, 8, 32.—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 56 (al. 48 de *Divers.*), c. 3, n. 4: "*Ne forte hic aliquis dicat: Si novit [Deus], quid nobis sit necessarium, utquid vel pauca verba dicimus? Utquid oramus? Ipse scit, quod scit nobis necessarium. Sed ideo voluit, ut ores, ut desideranti det, ne vilescat, quod dederit, quia et ipsum desiderium ipse insinnavit.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 379).—IDEM, *Epist.*, 130 (al. 121), n. 17: "*Quod quare faciat, qui novit, quid nobis necessarium sit, priusquam petamus ab eo, movere animum potest, nisi intellegamus, quod Dominus et Deus noster non voluntatem nostram sibi velit innotescere, quam non potest ignorare, sed exerceri in orationibus desiderium nostrum, quo possimus capere, quod praeferat dare.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 18: "*Unde et illud, quod Apostolus ait (Phil. iv, 6), non sic accipiendum est, tamquam Deo innotescant, qui eas [postulationes] et*

antequam essent, utique noverat, sed nobis innotescant apud Deum per tolerantiam, non apud homines per iactantiam." (P. L., XXXVIII, 500 sq.).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 2, ad 1: "*Non est necessarium, nos Deo preces porrigere, ut ei nostras indigentias vel desideria manifestemus, sed et nos ipsi consideremus, in his ad divinum auxilium esse recurrendum.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, ad 3: "*Deus nobis multa praestat ex sua liberalitate, etiam non petita, sed aliqua vult praestare nobis petentibus, hoc est propter nostram utilitatem, ut scilicet fiduciam quandam accipiamus recurrendi ad Deum et ut recognoscamus, eum esse bonorum nostrorum auctorem.*"—Catech. Rom., P. IV, c. 2, qu. 7.

¹³ Matt. XXIV, 20.—Conc. Vatic., Sess. III, c. 1: "*Hic solus verus Deus bonitate suâ et omnipotenti virtute . . . liberrimo consilio simul ab initio temporis utramque de nihilo condidit creaturam, spiritualem et corporalem. . . . Universa vero, quae condidit, Deus providentiâ suâ tuetur atque gubernat, attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter et dis-*

St. Thomas says: "All mistakes in this matter arise from failing to note the difference between the system of the universe and any particular system (*universalem ordinem et particularem*). There is nothing to hinder any particular system being changed, whether by prayer or by any other means; for there is that existing beyond the bounds of the system which is capable of changing it. But beyond the system that embraces all things nothing can be posited whereby such system could possibly be changed, depending as it does on the universal cause. Therefore the Stoics laid it down that the system established by God could nowise be changed. But they failed in a right appreciation of this general system in supposing that prayers were useless, which was taking for granted that the wills of men, and their desires whence their prayers proceed, are not comprehended in that general system. For when they say that the same effect follows whether prayers are put up or not,—follows, that is, as part of the universal system of things,—they manifestly reserve and except prayers as not entering into that general system. Supposing prayers included in the system, then effects will follow from them by divine appointment as from other causes. One might as well exclude the effects of other every-day causes as exclude the effect of prayer. And if the immutability of the divine

ponens omnia suaviter. Omnia enim nuda et aperta sunt oculis eius (Heb. iv, 13), *ea etiam, quae libera creaturarum actione futura sunt.*"

—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 2: "*Ex divina providentia non solum disponitur, qui effectus fiant, sed etiam, ex quibus causis et quo ordine proveniant. Inter alias autem causas sunt etiam quorundam causae actus humani. Unde oportet homines agere aliqua,*

non ut per suos actus divinam dispositionem immutent, sed ut per actus suos impleant quosdam effectus secundum ordinem a Deo dispositum; et idem est etiam in naturalibus causis. Et simile est etiam de oratione; non enim propter hoc oramus, ut dispositionem divinam immutemus, sed ut id impetremus, quod Deus disposuit per orationes esse implendum."

plan does not withdraw the effects of other causes, neither does it take away the efficacy of prayer. *Prayers, then, avail, not as changing a system arranged from eternity, but as being themselves part of that system.* And there is no difficulty in the efficacy of prayer changing the particular system of some inferior cause, by the doing of God, who overpasses all causes, and who consequently is not bound by the necessity of any system depending on any cause; but, on the contrary, every necessity of system dependent on any inferior cause is checked by Him, as having been instituted by Him. Inasmuch, then, as pious prayers avail to alter some points of the system of inferior causes that was established by God, God is said to 'turn' or 'repent.' Hence St. Gregory says that God does not change His counsel, though He sometimes changes His sentence,—not the sentence which declares His eternal arrangements, but the sentence which declares the order of inferior causes, according to which Ezechias was to die, or some nation to be punished for its sins. Such change of sentence is called in metaphorical language 'repentance,' inasmuch as God behaves like one repentant, to whom it belongs to change what He has done. In the same way God is said metaphorically to be 'angry,' inasmuch as by punishing He produces the effect of anger." ¹⁴

3. THE OBJECT OF PRAYER.—Whatever man

¹⁴ *Summa contra Gentiles*, III, c. 96 (Rickaby, *God and His Creatures*, pp. 258 sq.). In the above passage, according to Fr. Jos. Rickaby, S.J., whose free translation we have adopted (*God and His Creatures*, London 1905, p. 259), St. Thomas admirably, though perhaps inadvertently, "hits off the real meaning of what he and Aristotle called 'contingent' in reference to a 'particular

system,' but (apart from the doings of free will) every event is 'necessary' in the 'general system,' on the hypothesis of that system being. The killing of a sheep by lightning is a contingency unprovided for in the ovine economy, but pre-arranged in the general economy of the universe, in which general system it is an hypothetical necessity: it must be, if the system is to stand as it is."

may legitimately desire, he may also pray for. "*Hoc licet orare, quod licet desiderare.*"¹⁵ The opinion that we are permitted only to pray in a general way that God's "will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," is contrary to Revelation. Both the Old and the New Testament, especially the Epistles of St. Paul, contain numerous instances of prayer offered for specific objects. Christ Himself prayed not only for the salvation of mankind in general, but for particular favors, of which the very prayer He taught His disciples enumerates no less than seven. St. Paul says: "Be nothing solicitous, but in every thing,"¹⁶ by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your petitions¹⁷ be made known to God."¹⁸

a) *Unconditionally* we should pray for the supernatural graces of the moral order and for sanctification, *i.e.*, eternal beatitude and whatever is required to attain it,—sufficient and efficacious grace, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the higher graces of the interior life. *Conditionally* we may pray for such favors and blessings as

15 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 6.—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 56 (*al.* 48 *de Div.*), n. 2: "*Multi petunt, quod petere non deberent ignorantes, quid eis expedit. Duas ergo res, qui invocatur, cavere debet: ne petat, quod non debet, et ne ab illo petat, a quo non debet.*"

—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 4: "*Verba, quae Dominus noster Iesus Christus in Oratione [dominica] docuit, forma est desiderorum. Non tibi licet*

petere aliud, quam quod ibi scriptum est." (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 378, 379).—IDEM, *Epist.*, 130 (*al.* 121), n. 23: "*Quamobrem pudeat saltem petere, quae non pudet cupere.*" (P. L., XXXIII, 503).

¹⁶ ἐν παντί.

¹⁷ τὰ αἰτήματα ὑμῶν.

¹⁸ Phil. IV, 6; cfr. Matt. VI, 9 sqq.; Luke XXII, 32; XXIII, 34.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 5.

do not immediately serve the purpose of self-sanctification, *e.g.*, the charismata, visions, miracles, revelations,—provided, namely, that the circumstances of the case are not such as to render our prayer a *tentatio Dei*. Conditionally we may and should also petition God for the good things of the natural order. The condition is that we do not desiderate these temporal blessings inordinately, *i. e.*, for their own sake, but with due subordination to our supernatural destiny and the kingdom of God. A superabundance of temporal goods entails many temptations and dangers, and therefore, generally speaking, man should not desire or pray for wealth unless it is probable that he will employ it well, and even in that case he should exclude all inordinate desire by adding to his prayer the condition: “Provided it will help me to save my soul.”¹⁹

b) It is wrong and strictly forbidden to pray for anything that would surely prove detrimental to one’s own salvation or the salvation of others (*mala ordinis moralis*), *e.g.*, for the withdrawal of some indispensable grace, or that some one might sin, even if it were only as a means of humiliation and reform.²⁰

Evils of the natural order (*mala physica*), on

¹⁹ Prov. XXX, 8 sq.; Matt. VI, 33; XIII, 22; XXIV, 20; 1 Tim. VI, 8-10; Jas. IV, 3, 15; V, 17 sq.—*Prop. Damnatae Mich. de Molinos*, n.

14 sq. (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1234 sq.).

²⁰ Cfr. Rom. III, 8; Gal. II, 17. —St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 56 (*al.* 48

the other hand, may be made the object of prayer in so far as they are licit means for the attainment of a higher end.

READINGS.—Bl. Albertus Magnus, *Tract. de Forma Orandi*, ed. A. Wimmer, Ratisbon 1902.—St. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, P. V., c. 10 (ed. 2a, Vicetia, pp. 434 sqq.)—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83.—St. Alphonsus de' Liguori, *Prayer, the Great Means of Salvation*, tr. by J. B. Coyle, C.S.S.R., London 1922.—G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet nach der Lehre der Heiligen*, Vol. I, Freiburg 1874.—A. Stöckl, *Das Christentum und die modernen Irrtümer*, Mayence 1886, pp. 140 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 31 sqq.—L. Lemme, *Die Macht des Gebetes*, Barmen 1887.—O. Lefranc, *La Prière*, Paris 1904.—I. M. L. Monsabré, *La Prière*. Paris 1906.—S. Schiffrini, S.J., *Tractatus de Virtutibus Infusis*, pp. 574 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 151 sq., 157 sqq.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 209 sqq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastoral.*, Vol. II, pp. 497 sq., 505 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 269 sqq.—J. J. Wynne, S.J., in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII, pp. 345 sqq.—Fisher, *A Treatise on Prayer*, London 1885.—Jos. Egger, S.J., *Are Our Prayers Heard?* London 1910.—Aug. Poulain, S.J., *The Graces of Interior Prayer* (tr. by L. Yorke Smith, 4th ed., London, s. a.—Pohle-Preuss, *Grace, Actual and Habitual*, 5th ed., St. Louis 1924, pp. 43, 91, 127 sqq., 133, 142 sq., 266 sqq., 431, 433, 435.—C. Pesch, S.J., *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Vol. IX.

de Div.), n. 3: "In Psalmis sanctis legistis, veluti multa imprecari mala inimicis suis eum, qui loquitur in Psalmis. Et utique, ait aliquis, qui loquitur in Psalmis, iustus est; quare tam mala optat inimicis suis? Non optat, sed praevidet: prophetia est praenuntiantis, non votum male dicentis. In spiritu enim illi nove-

rant, quibus bene, et per prophetiam dicebant, tamquam optarent, quod praevidebant. Tu autem, unde scis, ne melior te futurus sit, cui hodie male petis? Sed scio illum malignum, dicis. Et te scis malignum. Quamvis forte audeas et de corde alterius iudicare, quod nescis: sed et te scis malignum. (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 378).

CHAPTER II

THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER AND THE DUTY OF PRAYING

I. THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER.—Prayer is necessary for every adult human being because without it no one can be saved. It is necessary by virtue of a positive divine command (*necessitate praecepti*), as may be gathered from many passages of Sacred Scripture; but it is also necessary as a means to attain salvation (*necessitate medii*) because prayer is the ordinary instrument which God has provided for obtaining the graces without which no man can save his soul.¹

Christ Himself inculcated the duty of prayer by word and example. "Thus therefore shall you pray," He says: "Our Father who art in heaven," etc.² "Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not into temptation."³ "Going out, he went into a desert place: and there he prayed."⁴

¹ Cfr. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 251: "*Oratio est omnibus adultis necessaria necessitate praecepti, immo probabilius necessitate medii. Primum evincitur ex innumeris S. Scripturae locis, v. g. Mt. xxvi, 41, Lc. xviii, 1. Ratio secundi est, quia oratio est medium*

ordinarium a Deo stabilitum ad gratias necessarias obtinendas (Io. xvi, 24)." Cfr. *Cat. Rom.*, P. IV, c. 1, qu. 2-4.

² Matt. VI, 9 sqq.

³ Matt. XXVI, 41.

⁴ Mark I, 35.

"And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." ⁵ "He spoke a parable to them, that we ought always to pray." ⁶ "He said to them: Pray, lest ye enter into temptation." ⁷ "And being in agony, He prayed the longer." ⁸

The Apostles faithfully echo the teaching and reinforce the example of their Master. "Let us rejoice in hope," says St. Paul, and be "patient in tribulation, instant in prayer." ⁹ "By all prayer and supplication praying at all times in the spirit." ¹⁰ "Pray without ceasing." ¹¹ Saint Peter writes: "Be prudent, therefore, and watch in prayers." ¹² St. John assures us that "whatsoever we shall ask according to his will, he heareth us." ¹³

The Fathers of the Church again and again insist on the necessity of prayer. Thus St. Cyprian says: "The Lord taught us to pray, not only by words, but also in deed, praying frequently Himself and thus showing us by His example what our duty is. . . . If *He* who was without sin prayed, how much more must sinners pray? If *He* spent the whole night in watching and praying, how much more should *we* pray and watch!" ¹⁴ Saint Ambrose writes: "The Lord

⁵ Luke XI, 9 sqq.

⁶ Luke XVIII, 1.

⁷ Luke XXII, 40 sqq.

⁸ Luke XXII, 43.

⁹ Rom. XII, 12; cfr. Col. IV, 2.

¹⁰ Eph. VI, 18.

¹¹ 1 Thess. V, 17.

¹² 1 Pet. IV, 7.

¹³ 1 John V, 14.

¹⁴ *De Dom. Orat.*, c. 29: "*Nec*

Himself spent all night in prayer, in order to invite you by His example to pray.”¹⁵ And St. Augustine: “Christ, who was the only-begotten Son, co-eternal with the Father, appeared in the form of a servant, and as such could have prayed silently; but He desired to appear petitioning the Father in such a way as to remember that He was our teacher,” *i. e.*, in whatever He did, He never forgot that He was our teacher.¹⁶

In view of these and many other similar texts we may say without exaggeration that it is the unanimous teaching of Sacred Scripture and tradition that no adult who has the use of reason can be saved without prayer, and that whoever habitually neglects this indispensable means of grace, forfeits his soul's salvation.

“Even to the baptized and to the saints prayer for divine assistance is always necessary,” says the second Council of Orange, “in order that they

verbis tantum, sed et factis Dominus orare nos docuit ipse orans frequenter et deprecans et quid nos facere oporteret exempli sui contestatione demonstrans. . . . Quodsi ille orabat, qui sine peccato erat, quanto magis peccatores oportet orare! Et si ille per totam noctem iugiter vigilans continuis precibus orabat, quanto nos magis in frequentanda oratione debemus nocte vigilare.” (*Corpus Script. Eccles. Lat. Vindob.*, Vol. III, I, 288).

¹⁵ *Expos. in Ps.*, 118, s. 8, n. 45: “*Ipse Dominus pernoctavit in oratione, ut te proprio ad deprecandum*

invitaret exemplo.”—Cfr. the same Father's *Expos. in Lucam*, l. V, n. 10: “*Dominus et orasse praeinititur (Lc. v, 16), non utique propter suffragium, sed propter exemplum, imitandi enim specimen dedit, non impetrandi ambitum requisivit.*” (*Migne, P. L.*, XV, 1313, 1638).

¹⁶ *Tract. in Ioan.*, 104, n. 2: “*Poterat Dominus unigenitus et coaeternus Patri in forma servi et ex forma servi, si hoc opus esset, orare silentio, sed ita se Patri exhibere voluit precatorem, ut meminisset nostrum esse doctorem.*” (*Migne, P. L.*, XXXV, 1902).

may be enabled to attain a happy end or persevere in good works." ¹⁷

2. WHAT IT MEANS TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.—In saying that we ought to pray "always" and "without ceasing," ¹⁸ Sacred Scripture does not, of course, mean that we must be continually engaged in actual prayer, but that we should have that habitual or virtual disposition which the theologians call "a good intention" and through which man's whole life becomes, as it were, one continuous prayer or act of divine worship. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God," says the Apostle. ¹⁹ "Whatever you do," writes St. Augustine, "do with a good intention, and you will be praising God." ²⁰

Gury tersely explains the duty of prayer as follows: "The command to pray obliges frequently, but not without intermission, because to pray without intermission is impossible on account of human weakness. The words, 'pray al-

¹⁷ *Conc. Arausic. II*, can. 10; cfr. Vol. II, of this Handbook, p. 101, note 9.

¹⁸ Luke XVIII, 1; XXI, 36; 1 Thess. V, 17; cfr. Eph. VI, 18.

¹⁹ 1 Cor. X, 31.

²⁰ *Enarr. in Ps.*, XXXIV, s. 2, n. 16: "*Tota die Deum laudare quis durat? Suggero remedium, unde tota die laudes Deum, si vis. Quidquid egeris, bene age et laudasti Deum. Quando cantas hymnum, laudas Deum: lingua tua, quid agit,*

nisi laudet et conscientia tua? Cessasti ab hymno cantando, discedis ut reficiaris? Noli inebriari et laudasti Deum. Discedis ut dormias? Noli surgere ad maledicendum et laudasti Deum. Negotium agis? Noli fraudem facere et laudasti Deum. Agrum colis? Noli litem movere et laudasti Deum. Innocentia operum tuorum præparat te ad laudandum Deum tota die." (*Migne, P. L.*, XXXVI, 341).

ways,' or 'pray without ceasing,' therefore, according to the common interpretation of theologians, mean that we must pray frequently, whenever an occasion offers, and never cease to pray because of disgust, sloth, or discouragement; in other words, that we must direct all our actions to God."²¹

What we may call the *moral continuity of prayer* consists in preserving the virtue of charity, which is the true source of all prayer. We should pour out our soul before God, as it were, frequently and in the most ardent manner of which we are capable. This is the sense of the maxim: "Pray often, but briefly," which governed the conduct of so many saints.²²

"When charity grows cold," says St. Augustine, "the heart becomes silent; when love burns warmly, the heart calls to God. If charity glows always, your heart prays, and if you pray always,

²¹ *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 251: "*Praeceptum orandi obligat frequenter, non tamen sine intermissione, quod humanae imbecillitati impossibile est. Verba igitur, 'Oportet semper orare,' significant ex communi doctorum interpretatione, frequenter orandum esse tempore opportuno et nunquam cessandum esse ex taedio, torpore, animi deiectione, vel etiam actiones nostras generatim ad Deum esse dirigendas.*"

²² Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, XXXVII, n. 14: "*Desiderium tuum oratio est, et si continuum desiderium, continua oratio. Non enim frustra dixit Apostolus: 'Sine*

intermissione orate' (1 Thess. v, 17). *Numquid sine intermissione genu flectimus, corpus prosternimus aut manus levamus, ut dicat: 'Sine intermissione orate'?* Aut si sic dicimus nos orare, hoc puto sine intermissione non possumus facere. Est alia interior sine intermissione oratio, quae est desiderium. Quidquid aliud agas, si desideras illud sabatum, non intermittis orare. Si non vis intermittere orare, noli intermittere desiderare. Continuum desiderium tuum continua vox tua est. Tacebis, si amare destiteris." (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 404).

you desire always, and if you desire, you think of Heaven." ²³

"The cause of prayer," says St. Thomas, "is the desire of the heart, from which prayer must proceed, and which must be continuous in us, either actually or virtually, for the power of this desire is in everything that we do out of charity. Now we must 'do all to the glory of God,' as the Apostle says; and therefore our prayer must be continuous. 'Through faith, hope, and charity,' as St. Augustine puts it, 'we pray incessantly with a continuous desire.' " ²⁴

By entertaining such a desire habitually, and with the aid of short and ardent exclamations known as ejaculatory prayers (*preces iaculatoriae sive iaculatae*), we can comply almost literally with the command to pray without ceasing. ²⁵

Christ Himself gave us the most effective ex-

²³ IDEM, *ibid.*: "Frigus caritatis silentium cordis est, flagrantia caritatis clamor cordis est. Si semper manet caritas, semper clamas, semper desideras; si desideras, requiem recordaris."

²⁴ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 14: "Causa orationis est desiderium caritatis, ex quo procedere debet oratio, quod quidem in nobis debet esse continuum vel actu vel virtute, manet enim virtus huius desiderii in omnibus, quae ex caritate facimus. Omnia autem debemus in gloriam Dei facere, ut dicitur 1 Cor. x, 31. Et secundum hoc oratio debet esse continua. Unde

Augustinus dicit: *In fide et spe et caritate continuato desiderio semper oramus.*"

²⁵ St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 130 (al. 121), c. 10, n. 20: "Dicuntur fratres in Aegypto crebras quidem habere orationes, sed eas tamen brevissimas et raptim quodammodo iaculatas, ne illa vigilanter erecta, quae orationi plurimum necessaria est, per productiores moras evanescat atque hebetetur intentio. Ac per hoc etiam ipsi satis ostendunt, hanc intentionem, sicut non est obtundenda, si perdurare non potest, ita, si perduraverit, non cito esse rumpendam." (Migne, P. L., XXXII,

ample of continuous prayer. He was able to say: "You ought to pray always," for His life was one long, uninterrupted prayer. In all He does thoughts of eternity flash through the veil of His sacred humanity. In Him all things are consecrated and brought nearer to God, because all are envisaged from the vantage point of eternity. While His days are devoted to labor for the glory of God and the benefit of His fellowmen, His nights are given to watching and praying.²⁶

Continuous praying does not necessarily involve the use of many words. "To make many words," says St. Augustine, "is one thing, to have lasting devotion, another. It is written of our Lord that He spent whole nights in prayer and that He prayed for a long time. Of the brethren in Egypt we are told that they often prayed, but their prayers were very short and, as it were, stealthily ejaculated,²⁷ in order that the carefully nurtured devotion which is most necessary for prayer, should not disappear or be weakened in consequence of the length of time. By this they show that they do not allow their devotion to become dulled, if it cannot be continuous, and, on the other hand, do not stop short when it continues. Therefore, do not employ many words when you pray, but pray much when you have devotion. To employ many words when praying means to waste words in a necessary matter; but to pray much means to

501).—Cfr. P. Bürger, *Unterweisungen über die christl. Vollkommenheit*, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1905, pp. 325, 344 sq.

²⁶ Cfr. Hettinger-Müller, *Apolo-*

gie des Christentums, Vol. II, 9th ed., p. 468.

²⁷ "Crebras quidem habere orationes, sed eas tamen brevissimas et quodammodo iaculatas."

knock constantly and with pious insistence at the door of Him to whom we direct our petitions. For here sighing and weeping is always better than much talking.”²⁸ In this passage St. Augustine gives the name of *orationes iaculatae* to those short and oft repeated prayers which are so effective if they come straight from the heart and are practiced habitually. He compares them with arrows shot to Heaven. An early example occurs in Numb. XII, 13: “Moses cried to the Lord, saying: O God, I beseech thee, heal her [Miriam].” This brief ejaculation is described by the Talmud as a model prayer.²⁹

3. THE DUTY OF PRAYING.—No detailed rules can be given for guiding the individual in complying with the duty of prayer, properly so called. Beyond a few general precepts all is left to custom and personal inclination and necessity. Certain definite prayers are prescribed for divine service, in the administration of the Sacraments, in the use of sacramentals, etc. Custom requires the saying of morning and evening prayers

²⁸ See note 25, *supra*.

²⁹ Berachoth, 34a. On ejaculatory prayers a modern theologian says: “*Valde commendandae sunt fidelibus preces iaculatoriae, nempe orationes, quibus bona nobis vel aliis a Deo efflagitamus, piae aspirationes, quibus actus caritatis, fiducia, doloris de peccatis, aliosve breviter elicimus. Magnam praestant utilitatem, utpote quibus multae gratiae impetrantur, virtutes augentur, tentationes facillime vincuntur, intellectus caelesti lumine imbuatur, erigitur affectus, inflammatur voluntas, quidquid in nobis terrenae adhaesionis et deformitatis est, paulatim*

*detergitur, et ipsos beatos in caelo quodammodo aemulamur. Fieri possunt die ac nocte, domi et foris, nullisque negotiis impediuntur, imo cuncta negotia expeditiora faciunt. Aspirationes aliae incipientibus, aliae proficientibus, aliae valde piis seu perfectis magis conveniunt. Sed eliciat quivis affectus, ad quos per gratiam Spiritus Sancti sese attractum sentit. Plurimum prodest, actus caritatis frequenter elicere, atque seipsum suosque ss. Cordibus Iesu et Mariae supplicando offerre.” (E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, Vienna 1884, p. 520).*

and grace before and after meals.³⁰ Though this custom does not entail a universally binding precept, one who would not pray at all, either because of neglect or indifference, could hardly escape sinning, and continued neglect of prayer is a sure indication of lukewarmness and spiritual sloth.³¹

Man has special need of prayer when he is exposed to temptations and dangers, whether of body or soul, or beset by tribulations and trials.³² It would be a mistake to pray only when the soul is favorably disposed, for it is precisely in the state of spiritual dryness that we stand most in

³⁰ Ps. LIV, 17 sq.; LXII, 7; Wisd. XVI, 28; Eccles. XXXII, 15, 17; Deut. VI, 10; Matt. XIV, 19; XV, 36; XXVI, 26; John VI, 11; Rom. XIV, 6; 1 Tim. IV, 3-5.—*Doctrina XII Apost.*, c. 8: Τῆς ἡμέρας οὕτω προσεύχεσθε. (Funk, *Patres Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 21).—*Constitut. Apost.*, l. VII, c. 47-49 (ed. Funk, I, 455 sqq.).—Tertullian, *De Orat.*, c. 10: "Quam temerarium est, aut diem sine oratione transigere (Eph. IV, 26), dum cessas fratri satisfacere, aut orationem perseverante iracundia perdere." (Ed. Leopold, P. II, 7).—IDEM, *ibid.*, c. 20: "Sed et cibum non prius sumere et lavacrum non prius adire, quam interposita oratione fideles decet. Priora enim habenda sunt spiritus refrigeria et pabula, quam carnis et priora caelestia, quam terrena." (Ed. Leopold, II, 14).—IDEM, *Apol.*, c. 39: "Non prius discumbitur, quam oratio ad Deum praegustetur. . . . Aequae oratio convivium dirimit." (Ed. Le-

opold, I, 112).—St. Jerome, *Epist.*, XXII, n. 37: "*Nec cibi sumantur nisi oratione praemissa, nec recedatur a mensa nisi referatur Creatori gratia.*" (Migne, P. L., XXII, 421).

³¹ Cfr. Gury, *Compend.*, I, n. 253: "*Quaeritur, an peccet, qui omittit preces matutinas aut vespertinas. Respondetur negative praecise per se, si interdum tantum omittantur. Ratio est, quia nulla est lex, quae determinatas preces singulis diebus et certis horis praecipiat. Plures tamen dicunt esse veniale ratione consuetudinis generalis fidelium. Ceterum in praxi excusari non possunt, qui illas saepius omittunt, tum quia non magis orant alio tempore aliove modo et sic frequenter orationis praecepto desunt, tum quia ob pericula, quae quotidie occurrunt, neglecta oratione in plura peccata labuntur. Prudentius autem se geret concionator vel catechista, si ab illa controversia exponenda absterneat.*"

³² Ps. CXIX, 1; Matt. VI, 13; XVII, 20; XXVI, 41.

need of grace. We must, therefore, cultivate a prayerful disposition and try to preserve it by frequently raising the mind to God and leading a good Christian life.

4. THE DIVINE OFFICE.—Clerics in higher orders are bound by the law of the Church to recite the Divine Office.

“All men,” says a recent writer, “should be constantly prostrate before the Divine Majesty to offer Him their praises and thanks, to implore the forgiveness of their sins and the helps necessary to salvation. But since the laity, distracted by earthly cares, acquit themselves but very imperfectly of this great duty, God has charged His Church to supply their inability and neglect. The Church, in fact, supplies this by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is constantly and uninterruptedly offered throughout the whole day, and also by the Divine Office, which is the appendix of the Sacramental Sacrifice. . . .

“The Church is a perfectly organized society, the members of which are conjointly responsible for one another. From this relation arise social duties which are superior to mere individual obligations, just as the general good predominates over the individual. Among the social duties the Liturgical Prayer occupies the first place, and is therefore the most important social work of the priest. The spiritual progress of each member of the Church depends, before all, on his fervor in prayer. In like manner, the increase and prosperity of the Church, and consequently the salvation of the world, depends on the piety with which the priests acquit themselves of their function of official intercessors, both in the Mass and in the Divine Office. Their official intercession . . . en-

joys a far greater power than their private prayers can possibly attain . . .

“The solution of the important, troublesome, and perplexing problems now agitating human society, depends, even in the purely economic and social domain, on the principles of moral theology, and they cannot be properly settled without the coöperation of the clergy. The present increase of exterior activity, on our [the clergy’s] part, obliges us so much the more to insist on the primal importance of the interior life and of union with God. Prayer, and especially the Liturgical Prayer, is in itself the most fertile social work, for without it all the others would be barren of results. It is prayer that will regulate our zeal and inspire the choice of means, willed by God and endowed with His grace. Prayer will animate and sustain our courage and enable us to persevere in our holy undertakings. Prayer will duly prepare our field of labor, by drawing heavenly blessings upon it; and prayer alone will impart fecundity to all our labors and exertions. Blessed Gabriel Perboyre was wont to say: ‘It is only through prayer that we are able to benefit souls.’ If the Apostles wrought wonders in converting nations, it was because they were united to God, prayed without ceasing, and acted only through the powerful influence of the Holy Ghost. We can, therefore, perceive the deplorable error of those who regret, as it were, the time devoted to the Divine Office, under the plea that it could be more profitably employed in works of zeal. Nothing is more disastrous to the Apostolic laborer than such *practical Pelagianism*, which pretends it has no need of divine grace to succeed in its labors. Such is not the calm, arduous, and fertile activity of men of God; it is nothing more than an inordinate and sterile agitation, inspired by earthly views and aims,

and subject to the impressions of the moment; it chokes the interior life and terminates in provoking wearisomeness, apathy, and dislike for earnest labor. Experience shows that the priests who are miserly of their time in reciting the Divine Office, are very prodigal of it when there is question of labors and amusements foreign to true sacerdotal zeal.”³³

The Divine Office is known popularly by the name of *Breviary*. This term, in liturgical language, designates a book which contains the regulations for the recitation of the canonical office. The Roman Breviary, which, with rare exceptions, is now used throughout the Latin Church, is divided into four parts according to the seasons of the year: winter, spring, summer, and autumn. It consists of the following elements: (1) the Psalter; (2) the Proper of the season; (3) the Proper of the Saints; (4) the Common; (5) certain special offices. The Psalter is divided according to a special plan. The Proper of the season contains the office of the different liturgical seasons,—Advent, Christmastide, Septuagesima, Lent, Holy Week, the Paschaltide, and the time after Pentecost. The Proper of the Saints contains the lessons, antiphons, and other liturgical formularies used on the feasts of the

³³ Willi-Girardey, C.S.S.R., *The Priest's Canonical Prayer*, St. Louis 1919, pp. 13, 24, 25 sqq.—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.* l. IV, n. 140-179 (ed. Gaudé, II, 560 sqq.);

M. Wittmann, *De Horar. Canonic. Utilitate Morali*, Augustae Vindel., 1810; E. J. Quigley, *The Divine Office*, Dublin 1920.

saints. Under the designation "Common" come all the lessons, gospels, antiphons, responsories, and versicles which are not reserved to a special occasion, but may be employed for a whole group of saints,—Apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, pontiffs, confessors who were not pontiffs, abbots, virgins, and holy women.

Each day of the year has its own office. In fact, it would be correct to say that each hour of the day has its own office, for, liturgically, the day is divided into hours, founded on the ancient Roman divisions of three hours apiece, namely, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and the night Vigils. In conformity with this arrangement the Office is portioned out into the prayers of the night vigils, that is to say, Matins and Lauds. Matins is divided ordinarily into three nocturns, to correspond with the three watches of the night, nine o'clock, midnight, and three o'clock in the morning. The day offices correspond more or less to the following hours: Prime to 6 A. M., Terce to 9 A. M.; Sext to midday; None to 3 P. M.; Vespers to 6 P. M. The Office of Compline, which falls somewhat outside the above division, and is of more recent origin, was recited at nightfall.³⁴

The obligation of reciting the Breviary, as stated above, binds all clerics in major orders,

³⁴ F. Cabrol, O.S.B., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, pp. 768 sqq.

even those suspended, excommunicated, or interdicted. Only those who by permission of the Supreme Pontiff have been reduced to the lay state are excused from this duty.

By special privilege the office may be commuted into other prayers. The "*Ordo Divini Officii Recitandi*," which differs in different dioceses as well as in religious communities, indicates the office to be said day by day by those for whom this particular order is prescribed either *iussu praesulum* or otherwise.

The obligation of reciting the Divine Office begins on the day of the reception of the subdiaconate, and on the hour that corresponds to the time of ordination. Thus one who is ordained subdeacon before nine o'clock in the morning, must begin with the Prime, whereas one ordained after that hour, *i. e.*, towards noon, is bound to recite the office of the day from Sext.

The obligation of saying the Divine Office binds under pain of mortal sin (*ex genere suo gravis*), for two reasons: first, because its end and object, namely, the worship of God, is a grave obligation and the Divine Office is an important means of attaining the same. Hence, a cleric, who, without sufficient cause, omits to say the entire Office, or a notable part of the Office of the day, commits a mortal sin.

By a notable part of the Divine Office the theologians understand one of the little hours in its entirety (*integra hora parva*) or any other portion of the Office equal to it. Hence it is a mortal sin to omit a whole nocturn with its lessons, or to recite only a very small portion of one of the little hours, omitting the rest; or to omit nine lessons with their responses; or to omit from several hours sufficiently large portions to equal a little hour.

The whole office for each day forms the matter of a single ecclesiastical precept, and consequently, whoever makes up his mind to omit the whole office, by this act of the will and its subsequent execution commits but one sin.

The obligation of reciting the Divine Office is attached to the day for which the Office is prescribed and cannot be supplied or made up after the day has passed.³⁵

Matins, Lauds, Prime and Tierce should be recited before noon, Sext and None before or after noon, Vespers and Compline in the afternoon (*sed sub levi tantum*).

An admirable rule for all who are obliged to recite the Breviary is couched in the medieval saying: "*Ante horam orare praevidentiae est, post horam negligentiae, in hora oboedientiae.*"³⁶

³⁵ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 791 sqq. We refer to the same author (*op. cit.*, pp. 793 sq.) for an explanation of the obligation restituendi fructus ob neglectam recitationem.

³⁶ Elbel-Bierbaum, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, 3rd ed., pp. 159 sq.: "*Quaeritur, an sacerdos peccet celebrando, priusquam dixerit Matutinum et Laudes? Respondetur: Probabiliter peccat venialiter. Ratio desumitur ex rubricis missalis (tit. I de praep. sacerdot.; De defect., tit. 10, n. 1), ubi hoc numeratur inter defectus pecca-*

minosos. Nihilominus si hoc fiat ex causa rationabili, esto non omnino ponderante et gravi, utputa quia sacerdos propterea commodius prosequetur sua studia, suum iter aliosve labores aut post Sacrum maiori cum devotione solet orare, omni omnino culpa vacabit, veluti recte docent Sanchez, Facundez, Lessius, Castro-palao, Illsung. Neque audiendi sunt nonnulli rigoristae antiquiores, qui peccati mortalis condemnant sacerdotem sine causa celebrantem ante dictum Matutinum, quia nemo condemnandus est ad poenas aeternas

5. *Where* should men pray? No particular place is prescribed for private devotions, and consequently a man may pray wherever necessity dictates or opportunity permits. The church, which is preëminently "the house of prayer," is, of course, better adapted than any other place for praying, because it directs the attention to God and thus excites and fosters devotion.³⁷

READINGS.—J. Margreth, *Das Gebetsleben Jesu Christi des Sohnes Gottes*, Münster 1902.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 160 sq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. II, pp. 498 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., pp. 269, 272 sq.—E. J. Quigley, *The Divine Office*, Dublin 1920.—St. Alphonsus, *Breve Trattato della Necessità della Preghiera*, Turin 1830 (*Opera Dogm.*, ed. A. Walter, II, Rome 1903, 631 sqq.).

neque ad obligationem gravem nisi constet de certa lege obligante. At nullibi constat in hoc casu de certa lege graviter obligante nec aliunde videtur adesse specialis connexio aut dependentia missae ab illis precibus." Cfr. Gury, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 32 sq.

³⁷ Cfr. Matt. VI, 6; XIV, 23; XXI, 13; Mark I, 35; 1 Tim. II, 8. —Tertullian, *De Orat.*, c. 18 says: "*De temporibus orationis nihil omnino praescriptum est, nisi plane omni in tempore et loco orare.*" And again (*ibid.*, c. 19): "*Sed quomodo omni loco, quum prohibeamur in publico? Omni inquit (1 Tim. ii, 8) loco, quem opportunitas*

aut etiam necessitas importaret. Non enim contra praeceptum reputatur ab Apostolis factum, qui in carcere audientibus custodiis orabant, et caneabant Deo, apud Paulum (Act. xxvii, 35), qui in navi coram omnibus eucharistiam fecit." (Ed. Leopold, P. II, 14).—St. Jerome, *Ep.*, XXII, n. 37: "*Quamquam Apostolus orare nos semper iubeat et sanctis etiam ipse sit somnus oratio, sic tamen divisas orandi horas debemus habere, ut si forte aliquo fuerimus opere detenti, ipsum nos ad officium tempus admoneat. Horam tertiam, sextam, nonam, diluculum quoque et vesperam, nemo est qui nesciat.*" (Migne, P. L., XXII, 421).

CHAPTER III

THE QUALITIES OF PRAYER

To be an act of virtue and an effective means of grace, prayer must have the following qualities:

I. It must be worthy of God, *i. e.*, it must be performed with a pure, or at least with a contrite, heart. This quality is called by some theologians *pietas* or *dignitas orationis*. The efficacy of prayer, it is true, does not necessarily depend upon one's being in the state of grace; but its supernatural meritoriousness does. The sinner, too, can pray efficaciously, and is in duty bound to pray, because prayer is a necessary factor in the process of justification and an important element of Christian morality.¹ But the prayer of an impenitent sinner is an abomination in the eyes of God.²

¹ Cfr. Pius X's Exhortation to the Clergy.

² Prov. XXVIII, 9; Luke XVIII, 13 sqq.—One of the condemned propositions taught by Quesnel (n. 50) read as follows: "*Frustra clamamus ad Deum: Pater mi, si spiritus caritatis non est ille, qui clamat.*" Another (n. 59) ran thus: "*Oratio impiorum est novum peccatum, et quod Deus illis concedit,*

est novum in eos iudicium." (Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion*, n. 1400, 1409).—"Quanto quisque est sanctorum et desiderii sancti plenior," says St. Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, XX, c. 17), "*tanto est eius in orando fletus uberior.*" (Migne, P. L., XLI, 683). Cfr. the same Saint's *Retract.*, I, c. 3, n. 3 (P. L., XXXII, 589) and St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 16.

II. Prayer, to be a truly virtuous act and an efficacious means of grace, must be performed with attention, *i. e.*, the person who prays must direct his thoughts to the act he is performing.

1. *Attention*, according to St. Thomas, comprises three stages. In the first or lowest of these the mind reflects on the words pronounced. This is called *attentio superficialis*. In the second stage the mind adverts not merely to the words as such, but to their meaning. This is called *attentio verbalis sive literalis*. In the third stage, which is the highest, the mind is directed immediately to God and His eternal truths. This is called *attentio spiritualis*.³ Whenever a person has the intention to pray or to honor God by praying, any one of these species of attention is sufficient to constitute prayer a religious act, and hence to fulfil an obligation (Office, penance, etc.), though the third (*attentio spiritualis*) is, of course, the best and noblest.

2. To pray with attention one must withdraw the mind from profane things. This can be done by appealing to the Holy Ghost for the right disposition, by placing oneself in the presence of

³ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 13: "*Triplex est attentio, quae orationi vocali potest adhiberi: una quidem, qua attenditur ad verba, ne aliquis in eis erret; secunda, qua attenditur ad sensum verborum; tertia, qua attenditur ad finem orationis, scilicet*

ad Deum et ad rem, pro qua oratur; quae quidem est maxime necessaria et hanc etiam possunt habere idiotae, et quandoque intantum abundat haec intentio, qua mens fertur in Deum, ut etiam aliorum omnium mens obliviscatur."

God, by making a good intention,⁴ by paying due regard to ecclesiastical customs and liturgical precepts, by observing a definite rule of life and order of the day, by putting the body into the proper posture, by seeking solitude and places particularly adapted to devotion, by properly employing sacred images, prayer books, and formulas of devotion, and by participating in common practices of piety, such as processions and pilgrimages.⁵

3. Opposed to attention is distraction (*evagatio mentis sive spiritus*), by which we mean the act of drawing off or diverting the mind from heavenly to earthly things.

⁴ Ecclus. XVIII, 23; Luke XI, 1; Rom. VIII, 15, 26.—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, l. III, c. 7, n. 3: "Quando quisque orat, sanctum ad se Spiritum advocat. At ubi venerit, confestim tentamenta daemoniorum, quae se mentibus humanis immergunt, praesentiam eius ferre non sustinentes, effugiunt." (Migne, P. L., LXXXIII, 672).—*Catech. Rom.*, P. IV, c. 7, qu. 1 and 5.

⁵ Cfr. Ps. LIV, 17 sq.; Deut. VI, 10; Matt. II, 11; VI, 6; XIV, 23; XVIII, 19 sq.; XXI, 13; Mark I, 35; Acts III, 1; X, 9; XX, 36.—Among the condemned propositions of Michael de Molinos is the following (n. 18): "Qui in oratione utitur imaginibus, figuris, speciebus et propriis conceptibus, non adorat Deum in spiritu et veritate." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1238).—Saint Thomas says (*Summa Theol.*, 2a, 2ae, qu. 84, art. 2): "Per signa humilitatis, quae corporaliter exhibemus, excitetur noster affectus ad subiici-

endum se Deo, quia connaturale est nobis, ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia procedamus."—IDEM, *ibid.*, ad 2: "Genuflectimus nostram infirmitatem designantes in comparatione ad Deum, prosternimus autem nos quasi profitentes, nos nihil esse ex nobis."—IDEM, *ibid.*, ad 3: "Per sensum Deum attingere non possumus, per sensibilia tamen signa mens nostra provocatur, ut tendat in Deum."—IDEM, *ibid.*, art. 3, ad 2: "Determinatus locus eligitur ad adorandum, non propter Deum, qui adoratur, quasi loco concludatur, sed propter ipsos orantes, et hoc triplici ratione: primo quidem propter loci consecrationem, ex qua specialem devotionem concipiunt orantes, ut magis exaudiantur, sicut patet ex oratione Salomonis (1 Reg. viii, 29); secundo propter sacra mysteria et alia sanctitatis signa, quae ibi continentur; tertio propter concursum multorum adorantium, ex quo fit oratio magis exaudibilis (Mt. xviii, 20)."

Distraction may be involuntary or voluntary.

a) *Involuntary distraction* arises from human infirmity.⁶ It is not sinful and, so long as the right intention persists, does not render prayer inefficacious. When earnestly combatted, involuntary distraction even helps to make prayer more meritorious in proportion to the measure of self-denial involved. To pray entirely without distraction is a special grace which God gives only to holy persons as a reward for long practice.⁷

Canon Lejeune says truly that the trials arising from distraction would often be lessened if men took the trouble to ask God for this favor. "When," he says,

6 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a zae, qu. 83, art. 13, ad 1: "*In spiritu et veritate orat, qui ex instinctu Spiritus ad orandum accedit, etiamsi ex aliqua infirmitate mens postmodum evagetur.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, ad 2: "*Mens humana propter infirmitatem naturae diu stare in alto non potest, pondere enim infirmitatis humanae deprimitur anima ad inferiora, et ideo contingit, quod, quando mens orantis ascendit in Deum per contemplationem, subito evagetur ex quadam infirmitate.*"—Cfr. Hense, *Die Versuchungen*, 3rd ed., pp. 466 sqq.

7 Poulain, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, pp. 126, 210. Cfr. St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, LXXXV, n. 7: "*Attendat et videat, quanta agunt r in corde humano: quemadmodum ipsae plerumque orationes impediuntur vanis cogitationibus, ita ut vix stet cor ad Deum suum, et vult se tenere, ut stet, et quodam-*

modo fugit a se nec invenit cancellos, quibus se includat, aut obices quosdam, quibus retineat avolationes suas et vagos quosdam motus, et stet iucundari a Deo suo. Vix est, ut occurrat talis oratio inter multas orationes."—IDEM, *ibid.*, CXVIII, s. 29, n. 1: "*Tunc porro in toto corde clamatur, quando aliunde non cogitatur. Tales orationes rarae sunt multis, crebrae autem paucis; omnes vero utrum cuiquam, nescio.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVII, 1086, 1585).—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, l. III, c. 7, n. 8: "*Pura est oratio, quum in suo tempore saeculi non interveniunt curae; longe autem est a Deo animus, qui in oratione cogitationibus saeculi fuerit occupatus. Tunc ergo veraciter oramus, quando aliunde non cogitamus. Sed valde pauci sunt, qui tales orationes habeant. Et licet in quibusdam sint, difficile tamen est, ut semper sint.*" (P. L., LXXXIII, 673).

"shall we understand that the success of our prayers, the triumph over distractions, the inclination and facility for converse with God, depend first and foremost upon the frequency and fervor of our petitions? I wish that this simple question could be put to all who bewail their incessant distractions during prayer: 'How many times a day do you ask God to free you from your distractions?' Would not many persons be constrained to confess that they have never thought of making this request to God? And they are astonished that attention, recollection, and fervor do not descend upon them suddenly as soon as they begin to pray."⁸

b) Distraction is *voluntary* when it is brought about or sustained by a free act of the will (*evagatio mentis voluntaria in se*), or when it owes its existence to some cause that the mind could remove if it would (*evagatio mentis voluntaria in causa*). Voluntary distraction consists chiefly in occupying the mind with thoughts which are incompatible with prayer. They render prayer a mere lip service (*oratio labialis*) and neutralize its effects.⁹ Such service does not honor God, but dishonors Him, and is therefore sinful.¹⁰ Who-

⁸ *L'Oraison Rendue Facile*, Paris 1904, P. III, ch. iii, p. 280; quoted by Poulain, *op. cit.*, pp. 419 sq.

⁹ St. Gregory the Great (*Moral.*, I. XXXIII, c. 22, n. 43) says: "*Quamvis et per hoc, quod verba potentia et ad deprecandum composita referantur, aperte inanitas orationis ostenditur. Veraciter namque orare est amarus in compunctione gemitus et non composita verba resonare.*"

¹⁰ Is. XXIX, 13; Matt. XV, 7 sq.

—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, I. III, c. 7, n. 4: "*Oratio cordis est, non labiorum. Neque enim verba deprecantis Deus intendit, sed orantis cor aspicit. Quod si tacite cor oret, et vox sileat, quamvis hominibus lateat, Deo latere non potest, qui conscientiae praesens est. Melius est autem cum silentio orare corde sine sono vocis, quam solis verbis sine intuitu mentis.*" (Migne, P. L., LXXXIII, 672).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*,

ever prays with a voluntarily distracted mind is guilty of irreverence, even if the prayers which he recites are not obligatory. The fault thus incurred, however, is not a mortal sin unless it involves grave neglect of some important duty or unless the duty to pray itself obliges *sub gravi* and its fulfilment is essentially impaired.¹¹

III. Prayer must furthermore be *devout*. Devotion is a sincere surrender of the will to God.¹² It is not merely a matter of the intellect (thinking of God), but also, nay mainly, of the will. Devotion may exist without any sensible emotion. All that is necessary for true devotion is that we have an earnest desire to please and serve God.¹³ Hence devotion can co-exist with insensibility or

2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 13, ad 3: "*Si quis ex proposito in oratione mente evagetur, hoc peccatum est et impedit orationis fructum. . . . Evagatio vero mentis, quae fit praeter propositum, orationis fructum non tollit.*"

¹¹ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 253: "*Quaeritur, quomodo peccet voluntarie distractus in oratione? Respondetur: Per se peccat venialiter, quoties voluntarie sine iusta ratione distrahitur, etiamsi oratio fiat absque obligatione, quia aliquam irreverentiam Deo irrogat.*" This view is not shared by all; cfr. Noldin (Vol. II, p. 152), Lehmkühl, Sabetti, etc.—Cfr. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 402 sqq.

¹² St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 82, art. 1; Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 386 sqq.; P. Bürger, *Unterweisungen über die christl. Vollkom-*

menheit, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1905, pp. 457 sqq.

¹³ St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, CXVIII, s. 29, n. 1: "*Clamor ad Dominum, qui fit ab orantibus, si sonitu corporalis vocis fiat non intento in Deum corde, quis dubitet inaniter fieri? Si autem fiat corde etiam silente corporis voce, alium quemlibet hominem potest latere, non Deum. Sive ergo cum voce carnis, quando id opus est, sive cum silentio ad Deum quum oramus, corde clamandum est. Est autem clamor cordis magna cogitationis intentio; quae quum est in oratione, magnum exprimit desiderantis et petentis affectum, ut non desperet effectum.*" (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXVII, 1585).—*IDEM*, *Serm.*, 56 (al. 48, de Div.), n. 5: "*Quae et dicitis, in cordibus vestris dicite. Sit orantis affectus, et erit exaudientis effectus.*" (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 379).

aridity of mind (*ariditas mentis*), whereas, on the other hand, it may be absent even though the heart overflows with emotion.

Aridity is absence of emotion, or, more properly, desolation during prayer. It is a state in which, notwithstanding our efforts, we are unable to elicit either pious thoughts or right sentiments. The trial sometimes arises from purely natural causes, which it is in our power to remove or diminish, *e. g.*, a dissipated life, which fills the imagination with frivolities; religious indifference; the lack of direct preparation for prayer; fatigue proceeding either from ill-health or too many occupations, etc.¹⁴ Sometimes aridity is a temptation or a punishment inflicted by God. But a man may pray efficaciously even during a state of aridity. It is the intention of the will, not emotion, that constitutes the value of prayer. To be sincerely sorry because one has no sensible devotion, is in itself a prayer.¹⁵

14 Poulain, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, pp. 423 sq.—Cfr. St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, l. XXXIII, c. 22, n. 43: “Sunt namque intra sanctam ecclesiam nonnulli, qui prolixas ad Dominum preces habent, sed vitam deprecantium non habent; nam promissa caelestia petitionibus sequuntur, operibus fugiunt. Illi nunquam etiam lacrimas in oratione percipiunt, sed quum post orationis tempora eorum mentem superbia pulsaverit, illico in fastu elationis intumescunt; quum avaritia instigat, mox per incendia avidae cogitationis

exaestuant; quum luxuria tentaverit, illicitis protinus desideriis anhelant; quum ira suaserit, mox mansuetudinem mentis flamma insaniae concremat. Ut ergo diximus, et fletus in prece incipiunt, et tamen expletis precibus, quum vitiorum suggestionibus pulsantur, nequaquam pro aeterni regni desiderio se flevisse meminerunt. . . . Virtutis pondus oratio non habet, quam nequaquam perseverantia continui amoris tenet.” (Migne, P. L., LXXVI, 700).

15 St. Augustine, *De Divers. Quaest. ad Simplic.*, l. I, n. 21:

Hence it would be a serious mistake to omit one's prayers because one feels no devotion.¹⁶ Fr. Poulain says we must pray to be delivered from this trial, "for otherwise we should not be making use of all the means within our power. The one that we neglect—prayer, is precisely the most powerful amongst them; still more, without it all the other remedies will generally be inefficacious, for consolation and success in prayer are graces. Now, God has ordained that prayer should be the almost necessary means of obtaining all graces."¹⁷

According to St. Philip Neri, "The best remedy against aridity and against the torpor which paralyzes the soul, is to present ourselves before God and the saints like a poor little beggar, who humbly asks for spiritual alms."¹⁸

"This prayer for deliverance," comments Fr. Poulain, "should, of course, be accompanied, like

"Nonne aliquando ipsa oratio nostra sic tepida est, vel potius frigida et paene nulla, immo omnino interdum ita nulla, ut neque hoc in nobis cum dolore advertamus? Quia si vel hoc dolemus, iam oramus." (Migne, P. L., XL, 127).

16 Ps. XXXIII, 2; Jas. V, 13.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, XXXIII, s. 2, n. 3: "*Quando Dominus ista dat, benedic, et quando ista tollit, benedic. Quia ille dat, ille tollit, sed seipsum a benedicente se non tollit.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 309).

—Thomas à Kempis, *Brevis Admonitio Spirit. Exercitii*, "*De Vigil. Matut.*": "*Si non habes devotionem*

in choro, psalle aequo animo et expecta gratiam Domini de caelo. Saepe dat Dominus in fine, quod ante iuste denegavit. Vult, quod laboremus, vult, quod patienter expectemus. Vult, quod gratum nobis et magnum, quod dare disposuit. Vult, ut cognoscamus veraciter, quia a nobis nihil boni habemus, sed totum de sua gratia et misericordia nobis constat." (Ed. Pohl, Vol. II, p. 424).

¹⁷ *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, p. 425.

¹⁸ Bolland., May 26, 2nd Life, No. 189, quoted by Poulain, *l. c.*

all others, by a complete abandonment to the divine will. While waiting to be heard, we must continue in a state of joyful resignation. St. Teresa says: 'The soul which begins to walk in the way of mental prayer with resolution, and is determined not to care much, neither to rejoice nor to be greatly afflicted, whether sweetness and tenderness fail it or Our Lord grants them, has already travelled a great part of the road.'¹⁹ There are two opposite extremes to be avoided here: one, to desire so fervently that we lose our peace and conformity to God's will; the other, to be so resigned that we no longer do anything ourselves or unite our own action to that of divine grace."²⁰

Forcing oneself to pray when one is tired and feels no devotion, is a proof that one is well disposed, and the will power put into such an act renders it supernaturally meritorious. God never denies His aid to those who sincerely seek Him.

It is the constant teaching of the Church that the decisive factor of prayer, as in fact of all religious exercises, is resignation to the will of God. "God hears not the voice," says St. Cyprian, "but the heart."²¹ A famous fifteenth-century preacher, P. John Herolt, O.P., whom we have quoted several times before, says: "You

¹⁹ *Life*, ch. XI, 20.

²⁰ Poulain, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

²¹ *De Dominica Orat.*, 4: "*Deus*

non vocis, sed cordis auditor est."

(*Corpus Script. Eccles. Lat. Vindob.*, III, I, 269).

must pray with sorrow for your sins and with devotion, because one Paternoster said devoutly and with a contrite heart, is more pleasing to God than ten thousand recited without devotion.”²² This is in perfect accord with the teaching of St. Thomas, that “the effect of prayer depends chiefly on devotion.”²³

IV. Prayer must moreover be *inspired by confidence (fiducia)* in the omnipotence and goodness of God and the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and men, through whom we approach the Father, and in whose name alone we can be saved.²⁴ It is His express command that we should offer all our prayers to the Father in His name, *i. e.*, with special reference to His merits and in the firm confidence that we shall be heard through Him and for His sake.²⁵

In praying with confidence, therefore, we must

²² *Serm. de Tempore*, 122: “*Debent orare cum contritione et devotione, quia unum Pater noster cum contrito corde et devote dictum placet Deo plus quam decem millia Pater noster sine devotione.*”

²³ *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 72, art. 2: “*Ex devotione maxime dependet orationis effectus.*”

²⁴ Matt. IX, 28 sq.; Mark XI, 22, 24; Luke XI, 9 sq.; John XIV, 1; Acts IV, 12; Rom. V, 2; Eph. II, 18; III, 20; 1 Tim. II, 5; Heb. IV, 16; Jas. I, 6; V, 15.—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, 1. III, c. 7, n. 15: “*Tantus debet esse orantis erga Deum affectus, ut non desperet precis effectum. Inaniter autem oramus, si spei fiduciam non habemus. Petat*

ergo, ut Apostolus ait, unusquisque in fide nihil dubitans (Iac. i, 6), nam qui dubitat similis est undae maris, quae a vento fertur et dispergitur.” (*Migne, P. L.*, LXXXIII, 674).—St. Bernard, *Serm. de Annunciat.*, III, n. 3: “*Sola spes apud te miserationis obtinet locum, nec oleum misericordiae nisi in vase fiduciae ponis.*” (*P. L.*, CLXXXIII, 394).—*IDEM*, *Serm. in Ct.*, XXXII, n. 8: “*Magna fides magna meretur, et quatenus in bonis Domini fiduciae pedem porrexeris, eatenus possidebis.*” (*P. L.*, CLXXXIII, 950).—Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 368 sqq.

²⁵ John XIV, 13 sq.; XVI, 23 sq.; Rom. V, 21.

not rely on our own merits. They do not give us a strict right to be heard, though, on the other hand, whatever merits we have will undoubtedly help to recommend our prayer to God. A life led in obedience to the divine commandments and a clear conscience justify a higher degree of confidence in God's mercy. "If our heart do not reprehend us," says St. John, "we have confidence towards God, and whatsoever we shall ask, we shall receive of him because we keep his commandments and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."²⁶ Confidence based on "God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,"²⁷ and rooted in the theological virtues of faith and hope, gives to prayer great value and power, so that we may surely expect to obtain that for which we ask. It is "the confidence which we have towards Him [God], that, whatsoever we shall ask according to his will, he heareth us, and we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask: we know that we have the petitions which we request of him."²⁸

Opposed to confidence, in point of faith, is *doubt* and *want of faith*, and in point of hope, *distrust* and *lack of courage*.²⁹

V. Prayer, to be pleasing to God, must proceed from an *humble heart*. Therefore we should

²⁶ 1 John III, 21 sq.

²⁷ 1 Cor. I, 2 sq.; Gal. I, 3.

²⁸ 1 John V, 14 sq.

²⁹ Matt. XIV, 31; XXI, 21; Mark XI, 22, 24; Jas. I, 6-8.

pray with submission to the will of God and with a clear realization of our own poverty and unworthiness.³⁰ Humility excludes the sinful passions of pride, anger, violence, hatred, etc.³¹ Pride in particular, and the self-righteousness to which it gives rise, prevent prayer from being efficacious and render it sterile.³² "God resisteth the proud," says Holy Writ, "and giveth grace to the humble."³³ St. Isidore writes: "If one prays boastfully, desirous of human praise, his prayer not only does not wipe out sin, but is itself changed into sin."³⁴ "When we have a favor to ask of the mighty," says the Rule of St. Benedict, "we approach them humbly and reverently; how much more should we direct our supplications to God, the Lord of the world, with humility and with a pure, undivided devotion!"³⁵

VI. Prayer must, finally, be *persevering*, that is to say, we must pray persistently, with un-

³⁰ Gen. XVIII, 27; Ex. III, 5 sq.; Is. VI, 2; Luke XVIII, 9-14.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 15, ad 2: "*Humilitas est necessaria ex parte ipsius petentis, quia suam indigentiam recognoscit.*"—St. Isidore, *Sent.*, l. III, c. 7, n. 20: "*Culpabiliter manus ad Deum expandit, qui facta sua orando iactanter prodit, sicut pharisaeus in templo iactanter orabat seseque magis quam Deum de operibus iustis laudari volebat.*" (Migne, P. L., LXXXIII, 676).—Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 377 sqq.

³¹ Matt. V, 23 sq.; VI, 10, 14 sq.;

XVIII, 23 sqq.; XXVI, 39, 42; Mark XI, 25 sq.; Luke VI, 36 sq.; 1 Tim. II, 8.

³² Matt. VI, 5; Luke XVIII, 9-14.

³³ Jas. IV, 6, 10; 1 Pet. V, 5.

³⁴ *Sent.*, l. III, c. 7, n. 21: "*Quorundam oratio in peccatum convertitur, sicut de Iuda proditore scribitur (Ps. cviii, 7). Qui enim iactanter orat, laudem appetendo humanam, non solum eius oratio non delet peccatum, sed et ipsa vertitur in peccatum.*" (Migne, P. L., LXXXIII, 676).

³⁵ *Regula S. Benedicti*, c. 20.

swerving purpose and unceasing effort. If we wish to be admitted to God's presence, we must "continue knocking."³⁶ We must pray always and never grow faint.³⁷ We must "pray without ceasing."³⁸

To repeat the same words frequently in praying is not identical with the practice of the Pharisees which our Lord censured, saying: "When you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens; for they think that in their much speaking they may be heard. . . . Woe to you . . . hypocrites, because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers."³⁹ What Christ condemns is the heaping up of words without sense or meaning in the belief that "much speaking" is the essential thing.⁴⁰ "Our Lord first censured much speaking," says St. Augustine, "lest you bring many words to God, as if you would teach Him by the use of many words. Therefore, when you pray, you must employ piety, not verbosity. . . . Do not speak much because God knows your needs."⁴¹ And St. Isidore: "Not in much speaking are men heard by God, as if trying to persuade Him by means of many words; it is not the wordy speech of the man who prays that conciliates Him, but a pure and sincere intention."⁴²

³⁶ Luke XI, 5-10.

³⁷ Luke XVIII, 1 sqq.; XXI, 36; Rom. XII, 12; Eph. VI, 18; Col. IV, 2.

³⁸ 1 Thess. V, 17; cfr. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 442 sqq.

³⁹ Matt. VI, 7; XXIII, 14; cfr. Mark XII, 40.

⁴⁰ Cfr. Is. I, 12, 15; 1 Kings XVIII, 26 sq.; Eccles. V, 1 sq., 6; Eccles. VII, 15.

⁴¹ *Serm.*, 56 (*al.* 48, *de div.*), n.

4: "*Dominus noster primo amputavit multiloquium, ne multa verba afferas ad Deum, quasi velis multis verbis docere Deum. Quando ergo rogas, pietate opus est, non verbositate. . . . Nolite ergo multum loqui, quia [Deus] novit, quid vobis necessarium sit.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 378 sq.).

⁴² *Sent.*, l. III, c. 7, n. 29: "*Non in multiloquio exaudiuntur homines a Deo, quasi plurimis eum*

The correct view of the subject can be briefly stated in the words of St. Augustine, to wit: "Beware of much speaking when you pray, but pray much and with a fervent and constant intention."⁴³ In laying down this rule the Saint points to the example of Christ, to which may be added that of the Apostolic Church.⁴⁴

Opposed to perseverance in prayer is *lack of confidence* and, in particular, that *lukewarmness* which, according to Sacred Scripture, in certain circumstances is worse than sin itself.⁴⁵

The oft-quoted text, Eccclus. VIII, 15: "Be not full of words in a multitude of ancients, and repeat not the word in prayer," means according to the Hebrew original: "Do not engage in conversation in the presence of princes and repeat not the word in thy prayer." The idea is not to warn against "vain repetitions" in praying, but against showing disrespect to God. This interpretation is confirmed by the manifest parallelism between the first and the second lines. The wise Preacher evidently wishes to say: The same respect that you would show in a meeting of princes, you must show towards God when you pray. The repetition of words is mentioned merely as a sign of inattention or distraction.⁴⁶

On the subject of "vain repetitions" Cardinal Newman says: "Prayer consists in the intercourse between the intelligent soul and Almighty God. It is essentially an act of the mind, and not of the body; except so far as the body supplies the organs by which the words of

verbis conentur inflectere. Neque enim conciliat eum multiplex orantis sermo, sed pura sinceraque orationis intentio." (P. L., LXXXIII, 678).

⁴³ "*Absit ab oratione multa locutio, sed non desit multa precatio, si fervens perseveret intentio.*" Epist., 130 (al. 121), c. 10, n. 19 sq.

⁴⁴ Acts I, 4, 13 sq.; XII, 5, 12; cfr. Luke XXIV, 49.

⁴⁵ Apoc. III, 15 sq.; cfr. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, I, 477 sqq.; Vol. II of this Handbook, p. 83.

⁴⁶ See the *Theol. Quartalschrift*, of Tübingen, 1906, p. 623.

spoken prayers are framed. Words alone do not constitute prayer, nor are they necessary to prayer, which may exist without the intervention of any human language at all. And words without the direct action of the soul, speaking through them, are not prayer at all, but 'vain repetitions.' If Protestants imagine that Catholics believe that words uttered by the lips, and not accompanied by the actual aspirations of the heart to God, can possibly be acceptable as prayer, we have only to request them to put the question to any Catholic of any class or any country, and they will speedily be undeceived. Such a notion was never heard of in the Church. When Catholics are guilty of these 'vain repetitions,' they are not praying. You must pray from the heart, or you cannot pray at all." ⁴⁷

All the properties of a good prayer are contained in the petition that is directed to God *in the name of Jesus*. "Whatever you shall ask the Father in my name," says our Lord, "that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." ⁴⁸ We pray in the name of Jesus when we address the Father according to the intention and in the spirit of Jesus, in conformity with His will and with reference to the kingdom of celestial charity and liberty established by Him. The fact that we belong to this kingdom, that we are citizens of Heaven, gives us a claim to be heard. Every

⁴⁷ J. H. Newman, *Vain Repetitions*, reprinted from *The Rambler*, Vol. IV, No. 21 (Sept., 1855), St. Louis 1910, pp. 13 sq.

⁴⁸ John XIV, 13 sq.; cfr. John XV, 7; XVI, 23; 1 John V, 14 sq. pp. 13 sq.

prayer that is addressed to the Heavenly Father in the name of Christ is certain of being heard. But the very condition that we must pray in the name of Jesus limits the scope of our prayers. Whatever we ask for in the name of Jesus we shall receive; but there are many things for which we may not ask in His name. Hence there are prayers and petitions which of their very nature can not and will not be heard. In the name of Jesus, says St. Augustine,⁴⁹ we may not pray for anything that is opposed to salvation. All prayers that run counter to the spirit of Christ, or do not fully agree with that spirit, will remain unheard in the kingdom of Heaven.

Midway between the prayers that cannot be heard because of their very nature, and those that are certain of being heard, is a third class that hovers as it were between Heaven and earth, and may be addressed to God only in a conditional way, *i. e.*, with due subordination of man's earthly to his heavenly interests and with absolute submission to the divine will.⁵⁰

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 15.—*Catechismus Romanus*, P. IV, c. 1, qu. 2-4.—G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet nach der Lehre der Heiligen*, Vol. I, Freiburg 1874, pp. 366 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der*

⁴⁹ *Tract. in Ioā.*, 73, n. 3; 102, n. 1 (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 1825, 1896).

⁵⁰ Cfr. Odilo Rottmanner, O. S. B., *Predigten und Ansprachen*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., p. 217.

Religion, Freiburg 1881, pp. 65 sqq.—Th. H. Simar, *Lehrbuch der Moralthologie*, 3rd ed., pp. 251 sqq.—Cardinal Newman, "Vain Repetitions," Reprinted from Vol. IV, No. 21, of *The Rambler*, St. Louis 1910.

CHAPTER IV

KINDS OF PRAYER

The distinction between different kinds of prayer is based partly on their form and partly on their substance.¹

1. With regard to substance we distinguish prayers of adoration or praise, prayers of thanksgiving, and prayers of supplication or petition. However, this distinction is a purely abstract one; in reality each of these species of prayer presupposes or includes the others, because, on the one hand, all prayer *per se* serves to praise or glorify God, while, on the other, no prayer is offered to Him, at least here on earth, that does not somehow partake of the character of a petition.

a) The prayer of those who enjoy the beatific vision of God (the angels and saints) consists in adoration (*adoratio, laudatio*) and thanksgiving (*gratiarum actio*).² These two kinds of prayer are the most perfect and the sublimest of all. Through adoration, in particular, the Church

1 1 Tim. II, 1.

2 Is. VI, 1 sqq.; Deut. VII, 10; Apoc. IV, 7 sqq.—St. Augustine, *Serm.*, 159 (*al. 17 de Verbis Apost.*), n. 1: "*In patria [caelesti] nullus orandi locus erit, sed tantum lau-*

dandi. Quare orandi locus nullus erit? Quia nihil deest. Quod hic creditur, ibi videtur; quod hic speratur, ibi tenetur; quod hic petitur, ibi accipitur." (Migne, P. L., XXXVIII, 868).

Militant unites herself by anticipation with the Church Triumphant.

The prayer of thanksgiving flows naturally from the heart of man as he perceives God's favors and graces.³ Christ frequently gave thanks to His Heavenly Father.⁴ Prayers of thanksgiving were inculcated and practiced by the Apostles.⁵ The Church offers such prayers to God particularly through the Mass, which is essentially a sacrifice of thanksgiving.⁶

b) Petition (*precatio, postulatio, preces*) is preëminently the prayer of those who believe and hope as wayfarers. It is an expression of bodily and spiritual indigence and may therefore be fitly termed "*the prayer par excellence.*"⁷ As long as man has not yet attained the object of his hope, his prayer is necessarily one of petition, and the more clearly he perceives his helplessness in this "vale of tears," the more readily will he direct his eyes towards Heaven and beg God to deliver him from evil and bless him.⁸ Ps. XXX, 1, 2: "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains,

³ Rom. XI, 36; XVI, 25-27; Gal. I, 4 sq.; 1 Tim. I, 17; 2 Tim. IV, 18.

⁴ Matt. XV, 36; XXVI, 26; Mark VI, 41; VIII, 6; Luke IX, 16; XXII, 19; John XI, 41; 1 Cor. XI, 24.

⁵ Acts IV, 24-31; Eph. V, 20; Col. I, 12; II, 6 sq.; III, 15, 17; IV, 2; 1 Thess. V, 18.

⁶ "*Vere dignum et iustum est, ac-*

quum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere. . . ." Cfr. 1 Thess. I, 3; II, 12.

⁷ Cfr. St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orth.*, I. III, c. 24: "*Oratio est. . . . eorum a Deo postulatio, quae postulare convenit.*" (Migne, P. G., XCIV, 1089).

⁸ Matt. VI, 13; Jas. I, 17; cfr. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, Vol. I, pp. 62 sqq.

from whence help shall come to me. My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

c) Special kinds of petition are the prayer for forgiveness of sins (*deprecatio*) or propitiation, and the prayer of intercession (*intercessio*), in which man asks God's grace for others.

The prayer of intercession is founded upon the divine economy of salvation. Man stands before God not as an isolated individual, but as part of an organism, *viz.*: humanity and the Church (*communio sanctorum*). To pray for our fellowmen is an important duty which we owe alike to those who are members of the mystical body of Christ, and to those who are destined and able to become such. Christ and His Apostles admonish us to pray for all men without exception,⁹ but especially for our superiors, our brethren in the faith, and our enemies.¹⁰

To pray for others is a duty prescribed by the law of charity, which varies in proportion to the needs of our fellowmen and our individual relations to each.¹¹

⁹ Matt. VI, 9 sqq.; Luke XXIII, 34; John XVII, 20 sq.; 1 Tim. II, 1-5; Jas. V, 16.

¹⁰ Matt. V, 44; Luke VI, 28; Eph. VI, 18 sq.; Col. VI, 2 sq.; 1 Tim. II, 2—Cfr. St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 231, n. 6 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIII, 1026).—Gury, *Compendium*, Vol. I, n. 254: "*Quaeritur, pro quibus sit orandum? Resp.: 1. Pro nobismet-ipsis (iuxta primam caritatis regu-*

lam);—2. *Pro omnibus hominibus viatoribus, etiam infidelibus*;—3. *Pro animabus in purgatorio detentis. Eruitur 1° ex lege generali caritatis; —2° ex verbis d. Pauli (1 Tim. ii, 1-2). . . . Nec excipiendi sunt inimici, ut patet ex verbis Christi Mt. v, 44.*"

¹¹ Cfr. St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 130 (al. 121), c. 12, n. 23: "*Haec et pro nobis et pro nostris et pro alienis*

The "poor souls" in Purgatory have a special claim to our intercession because they need prayer most of all and are unable to help themselves.¹² After them come the impenitent sinners and those who are separated from the Church of Christ.

Our social relations oblige us to pray, first of all for parents, children, brothers and sisters; secondly, for more distant relatives, friends, and benefactors, and thirdly, for those in authority in Church and State.

To pray for our enemies is an act of heroic virtue and therefore specially meritorious. Generally speaking it is only a matter of counsel, but there are times when it becomes a strict duty.

The above enumeration shows that we are bound to pray for all men without exception, unless indeed God should manifest to us by a private revelation that some particular person was irretrievably lost.¹³

The opinion that "the world," or certain individuals, may be excluded from our intercessory prayers, is untenable. Yahweh's command to Jeremias,¹⁴ which is sometimes quoted in support of this view, does not refer to eternal salvation, for which man may and should always pray, but to the prophet's petition that God might

atque pro ipsis inimicis sine fluctu dubitationis oranda sunt, quamvis alius pro isto, alius pro illo, sicut se habent propinquitates vel longinquitates necessitudinum, in corde orantis oriatur aut excellat affectus." (Migne, P. L., XXXIII, 503).

12 2 Tim. I, 16-18.

13 Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 8: "*Diligere inimicos in generali est in praecepto, in speciali autem non est in praecepto, nisi secundum praeparationem animi, ut scilicet homo esset paratus etiam specialiter inimicum diligere et eum*

iuvare in necessitatis articulo vel si veniam peteret. Sed in speciali absolute inimicos diligere et eos iuvare, perfectionis est. Sed similiter necessitatis est, ut in communibus nostris orationibus, quas pro aliis facimus, inimicos non excludamus. Quod autem pro eis specialiter oremus, perfectionis est, non necessitatis, nisi in aliquo casu speciali." (Cfr. art. 7, ad 3).—A. Lehmkuhl, *S. J., Casus Conscientiae*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., n. 390 sqq.

14 Jer. VII, 16.

avert the temporary punishments He was about to inflict upon the Israelites for their sins.

When Our Lord said to His disciples: "I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me,"¹⁵ He merely meant to assure His disciples that they were the particular object of His solicitude. This interpretation is borne out by verse 20 of the same chapter of St. John's Gospel, where Christ says: "And not for them [the disciples] only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."¹⁶

A difficulty might arise from 1 John V, 16, were it not evident from the context that the Apostle means to say, not that it is useless to intercede for those who commit mortal sin, but merely that prayers said for them are not easily heard.¹⁷

d) As it is permissible to ask the saints in Heaven to intercede for us, provided, of course, that our confidence in their help does not become to us an occasion of sloth or false security,¹⁸ so it is entirely in accord with the dogma of the

¹⁵ John XVII, 9.

¹⁶ John XVII, 20 sq.; cfr. Matt. 5, 44; Luke XXIII, 34. See, however, J. McRory, *The Gospel of St. John*, 4th ed., Dublin 1914, p. 286; J. Knabenbauer, S.J., *Commentarius in Evang. sec. Ioannem*, 2nd ed., Paris 1906, pp. 505 sq.

¹⁷ J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 62 sqq.

¹⁸ St. Jerome, *Contra Vigilant.*, n. 6: "*Si apostoli et martyres adhuc*

in corpore constituti possunt orare pro ceteris, quando pro se adhuc debent esse solliciti, quanto magis post coronas, victorias et triumphos?" (Migne, P. L., XXIII, 344).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 11: "*Quum oratio pro aliis facta ex caritate proveniat, quanto sancti, qui sunt in patria, sunt perfectioris caritatis, tanto magis orant pro viatoribus, qui orationibus iuvare possunt, et quanto sunt Deo coniunctiores, tanto*

Communion of Saints to ask the living faithful for their intercession here below. St. Paul repeatedly requests his fellow-Christians to pray for him and assures them that he will pray for them.¹⁹

2. In regard to its *form*, prayer may be either vocal (*oratio vocalis*) or mental (*oratio mentalis*).²⁰

A man prays orally when he expresses his interior devotion by means of words or formularies. The essential thing, of course, is the interior devotion, for purely external or vocal prayer without a corresponding interior disposition would be no prayer at all.²¹

In vocal prayer at Mass, as prescribed by the Church, the words should be uttered so that the one who is praying can hear them, unless there be an obstacle.²² Each word must, moreover, be pronounced correctly and according to the manner prescribed (*rite ac recte*). If

eorum orationes sunt magis efficaces. Habet enim hoc divinus ordo, ut ex superiorum excellentia in inferiora refundatur, sicut ex claritate solis in aërem."

¹⁹ Rom. XV, 30 sqq.; 2 Cor. I, 11; Eph. I, 15 sq.; VI, 18 sq.; Phil. I, 19; Col. IV, 2 sqq.; 1 Thess. I, 2; 2 Thess. I, 11; III, 1 sq.; cfr. Heb. XIII, 18 sq.

²⁰ G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet nach der Lehre der Heiligen*, Vol. I, pp. 73 sqq., 85 sqq.; Vol. II, pp. 6 sqq., 203 sqq. Cfr. Poulain, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, pp. 7 sqq.

²¹ Is. XXIX, 13; Matt. XV, 7 sq.; Mark VII, 6.—St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.*, CXIX, s. 29, n. 1.

²² V. Croix, *Theol. Mor.*, IV, 1294, who calls this opinion "*communis*." (Cfr. Bonacina, *De Hor. Can.*, D. I, qu. iii, P. 2, § 1, n. 24; Salmant., XVI, 3, 5).—St. Alphonsus seems to contradict this view when he says that one who is unable to hear himself can satisfy this obligation. But the contradiction is apparent only. The Saint does not mean one who cannot hear himself because the sound his vocal organs make is inaudible, but for some other reason, *e. g.*, because of great noise or deafness. (St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, IV, 163; VI, 414).

one syncopates or mutilates his words, or corrupts their meaning, he does not satisfy his obligation, unless there be a *parvitas materiae*.²³ It is not regarded as a corruption to swallow the final syllables.²⁴ Those who suffer from a defect of speech or who have unfortunately contracted a habit of inattention, are obliged to do the best they can and should try to correct their evil habit.²⁵ In saying the Divine Office or any other prescribed prayer in common with others, it is sufficient to listen with attention to those parts which are recited by others.²⁶

In order that vocal prayer be meritorious, it is necessary that it be recited in the state of grace, for if one is in the state of mortal sin, prayer can bring him only the graces absolutely necessary for conversion.²⁷ The theologians distinguish a threefold power of prayer: that of acquiring merit (*meritoria*), that of making satisfaction for sin (*satisfactoria*),²⁸ and that of procuring favors for others (*impetratoria*). In as far as it is meritorious, prayer is based upon justice; in as far as it is impetratory, it is based upon the divine mercy;²⁹ in as far as it is satisfactory, it is based upon justice in regard to the living and mercy in regard to the dead.³⁰ In as far as it is based upon justice, it produces its effects infallibly; in as far as it is based upon the divine mercy, it produces its effects conditionally, *i. e.*, if and in as much as it pleases God. Prayer, in as far as it is meritorious, profits only the person who prays, whereas impetratory and sat-

²³ St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, IV, 165.

²⁴ Croix, *Theol. Mor.*, IV, 1302.

²⁵ St. Alphonsus, *op. cit.*, IV, 165.

²⁶ Laymann, *De Hor. Can.*, c. V, 8; Salmant., XVI, 5, 6.

²⁷ Cfr. Jas. V, 16; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 16.

²⁸ St. Thomas, *Suppl.*, qu. 15, art. 3, ad 1.

²⁹ IDEM, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 16, ad 2.

³⁰ Suarez, *De Poenit.*, dist. 23, sect. 1; De Lugo, *De Poenit.*, disp. 26, sect. 1; Cat. Rom., "De Sac. Poenit.," n. 51.

isfactory prayer may also profit others. Satisfactory prayer profits the living *per modum solutionis*, and therefore infallibly; ³¹ the dead, *per modum suffragii*, i. e., by the power of impetration, ³² if and to the extent in which it pleases God to grant the favor requested. ³³

Interior prayer is a devout communion of the soul with God effected without the aid of external words or formularies. Vocal and interior prayer do not exclude, but, on the contrary, include each other, as the former is the beginning and foundation of the latter and can never be entirely dispensed with even in the highest stages of the spiritual life. ³⁴

Interior prayer in its higher forms is called meditation and contemplation.

a) *Meditation* may be defined as the application of the three powers of the soul to prayer—

³¹ Suraz, l. c., and De Lugo, l. c.

³² Cfr. Leo X, Bull "Exsurge Domine."

³³ S. R. C., July 28th, 1840.—Cfr. J. D'Annibale, *Summula Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., Rome 1908, pp. 17 sq.

³⁴ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 12: "Adiungitur vox orationi triplici ratione: primo quidem ad excitandam interiorem devotionem, qua mens orantis elevetur in Deum, quia per exteriora signa sive vocum sive etiam aliorum factorum movetur mens hominis secundum apprehensionem et per consequens secundum affectionem. Unde Augustinus dicit [Epist., 130 (al. 121), c. 9, n. 18], 'quod verbis et aliis signis ad augendum desiderium sanctum nos ip-

sos acrius excitamus.' Et ideo in singulari oratione tantum est vobis et huiusmodi signis utendum, quantum proficit ad excitandum interius mentem. Si vero mens per hoc distrahatur vel qualitercunque impediatur, est a talibus cessandum, quod praecipue contingit in his, quorum mens sine huiusmodi signis est sufficienter ad devotionem parata. . . . Secundo adiungitur vocalis oratio quasi ad redditionem debiti, ut scilicet homo Deo serviat secundum illum totum, quod ex Deo habet; id est, non solum mente, sed etiam corpore, quod praecipue competit orationi, secundum quod est satisfactoria. . . . Tertio adiungitur vocalis oratio ex quadam redundantia ab anima in corpus ex vehementi affectione secundum illud Ps. xv, 9."

the memory proposing a religious or moral truth, the understanding considering this truth in its application to the meditating individual, the will forming practical resolutions and asking for grace to keep them.³⁵

Meditation differs from the theoretical consideration of religious truths or the study of theology in this, that it aims at the immediate application of the truths perceived by the understanding to one's personal needs and strives to elicit the corresponding religious emotions.³⁶

The essential constituents of meditation are the preparatory prayer, realization of the divine presence, a lively consideration of the truths proposed, application of the same to one's personal needs, the making of practical resolutions with regard to them (*e. g.*, to apply them to-day, or in this or that concrete case, etc.), and the final prayer (*colloquium*), which should include thanksgiving, self-oblation, and a petition for the graces necessary to keep the good resolutions made.

Meditation is an important means of moral perfection, and though not strictly necessary for salvation, is indispensable to all who wish to lead

³⁵ Addis and Arnold, *Catholic Dictionary*, 9th ed., London 1917, p. 573.

³⁶ Pseudo-Augustine, *Append. Serm.*, 302 (*al. 112 de Temp.*), n. 3:

"Non sit mora in faciendo, quod intus sapitis in intellegendo. Et ille beatissimus est, qui divinas Scripturas vertit in opera." (Migne, P. L., XXXIX, 2324).

a truly spiritual life, especially those who are called to a state of higher perfection.³⁷

On the uses of meditation St. Bernard of Clairvaux says: "It purifies the source from which it flows, namely, the mind. It directs the affections,³⁸ guides a man's acts³⁹ and omissions, corrects his mistakes, regulates his habits, and makes life honorable. In fine, it introduces a man to the science of divine and human things. It clears up confusion, unites the things that are separated, collects those that are scattered, brings to light that which is hidden, and follows the footsteps of truth.⁴⁰ It examines probabilities and uncovers semblance and error. It provides due consideration of that which is to be done, does not lose sight of that which is completed, and tolerates nothing in the mind which is unregulated or in need of correction.⁴¹ In prosperity it reckons beforehand with misfortune and in adversity scarcely feels that which is contrary, thus performing the task of courage together with that of prudence."⁴²

b) *Contemplation*⁴³ or effective prayer is the final act (*actus completivus*) of meditation, by which the soul flies straightway into the presence of God and beholds Him directly,⁴⁴—not by intuition, as the pure spirits behold Him in Heaven, but discursively, *i. e.*, by means of the

³⁷ Cfr. Pius X's Encyclical Letter to the Catholic Clergy.

³⁸ "Affectus."

³⁹ "Actus."

⁴⁰ "Vera vestigat."

⁴¹ "Acta recogitat, ut nihil in mente resideat aut incorrectum aut correctione egens."

⁴² *De Consideratione*, I. I, c. 7

(Migne, *P. L.*, CLXXXII, 737).

⁴³ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 179 sq.—For the literature of the subject see Readings, *infra*, p. 54 sq.

⁴⁴ Rom. I, 20; cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 179, art. 1, ad 3.

truths and principles suggested by the preceding meditation. Hence the three stages of cogitation, meditation, and contemplation.⁴⁵

Contemplation is called ordinary or acquired (*ordinaria sive acquisita*) if it is the result of one's own endeavor, aided by divine grace; infused, passive or extraordinary (*infusa sive passiva*) when directly infused by God. Extraordinary (passive or infused) contemplation is a charism which God usually gives as a reward to those who cultivate the interior life. It is identical with the mystic state. In its higher forms it is sometimes accompanied by extraordinary manifestations of divine grace, such as ecstasies, visions, and revelations,⁴⁶ and culminates in the mystic union of the soul with God (also called mystic betrothal, spiritual marriage,

⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, qu. 180, art. 3.

⁴⁶ Matt. V, 8.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 180, art. 2: "Ad vitam contemplativam potest aliquid pertinere dupliciter: uno modo essentialiter, alio modo dispositive. Essentialiter quidem virtutes morales non pertinent ad vitam contemplativam, quia finis contemplativae vitae est consideratio veritatis. . . Dispositive autem virtutes morales pertinent ad vitam contemplativam. Impeditur enim actus contemplationis, in quo essentialiter consistit vita contemplativa, et per vehementiam passionum, per quam abstrahitur intentio animae ab intelligibilibus ad sensibilia, et per tumultus exteriores. Virtutes autem morales impediunt vehementiam

passionum et sedant exteriorum occupationum tumultus. Et ideo virtutes morales dispositive ad vitam contemplativam pertinent."—IDEM, *ibid.*, art. 3: "Virtus castitatis maxime reddit hominem aptum ad contemplationem, inquantum delectationes venereae maxime deprimunt mentem ad sensibilia."—IDEM, *ibid.*, art. 5: "Supremus gradus contemplationis praesentis vitae est, qualem habuit Paulus in raptu, secundum quem fuit medio modo se habens inter statum praesentis vitae et futurae."—Cfr. *ibid.*, qu. 173, art. 3 (*visio prophetica*); qu. 175 (*raptus*).—Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, II, 423 sqq. —For other literature on the extraordinary phenomena of the higher spiritual life see Readings, *infra*.

mystic death or annihilation). These form the subject matter of Mystical Theology.⁴⁷ They represent a higher stage, being more perfect than the ordinary prayer, either mental or vocal, first, because they proceed from a higher principle *i. e.*, a mind directly enlightened by God; secondly, because acts of prayer performed in these states are more intensive, and, thirdly, because they result in a more intimate union with God.

Visions and revelations are not without danger and unless accompanied by suffering and humiliation are apt to lead not to God but to self-exaltation. St. Paul, one of the greatest masters of the spiritual life, has expressed this truth in clear terms. Compelled to defend himself against attacks upon His Apostolic dignity, he calls attention to the ecstasies and visions accorded to him, but immediately adds: "Lest the greatness of the revelations should exalt me, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me." After he had thrice besought the Lord to take this burden from him, he was told: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for power is made perfect in infirmity," whereupon he exclaimed: "Gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For which cause I please myself in my infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am powerful."⁴⁸ The ways of salvation

⁴⁷ Gal. II, 20.—Poulain, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, pp. 59 sqq., 200 sqq. On the literature of mystical theology see Readings, *infra*.

⁴⁸ 2 Cor. XII, 7 sqq.—Cfr. V. Weber, *Der Galaterbrief*, Ravens-

burg 1901, pp. 255 sqq.—The Vulgate rendition "*stimulus carnis*" for σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί is obscure and inexact, and, in the words of Father F. Prat, S.J., "*a fini par accréditer une opinion sans grande probabilité intrinsèque, inconnue à toute l'anti-*

have not changed since the days of St. Paul, no more than human nature has changed, or the destiny of the soul.

"Whoever tries to reach the summit of perfection," says St. Gregory the Great, "and wishes to stand upon

quité et peu conciliable avec le texte original. Le σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, 'l'épine dans la chair' ou 'l'aiguillon pour la chair' désignerait un penchant aux voluptés charnelles, source de pénibles et humiliants combats. Ni la vieillesse dont il approchait, ni le don de continence qu'il dit avoir reçu ne le mettaient absolument à l'abri de la tentation, et il est impossible de prouver qu'il ait été exempt de cette épreuve. Mais on peut affirmer sans crainte que rien dans ses paroles n'autorise cette explication. Supposé même que σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί pût avoir ce sens, Paul ne ferait-il pas le jeu de ses adversaires en leur relevant l'existence d'une pareille lutte connue de lui seul et de Dieu? Comment pourrait-il s'y complaire et la mettre au nombre des infirmités dont il se fait gloire? Laissant de côté les tentations charnelles, nous nous trouvons en présence de deux interprétations qui partagent les commentateurs anciens: les persécutions et les maladies. Mais il est difficile de comprendre que les persécutions extérieures puissent s'appeler une épine dans la chair, et on conçoit moins encore que l'Apôtre s'en trouve humilié. Ces persécutions sont tellement le lot du chrétien, elles sont si expressément annoncés à quiconque veut vivre pieusement dans le Christ Jésus, qu'on ne voit pas à quel titre il les regarderait comme un préservatif personnel, surtout contre les tentations d'orgueil. Et arrivera-t-on à se persuader que Paul en ait demandé trois fois la délivrance? Reste la maladie: 'On dit qu'une douleur physique le faisait cruelle-

ment souffrir; les douleurs du corps sont très souvent dues aux anges de Satan, mais non pas sans la permission divine.' Ainsi parle saint Augustin, et presque tous les modernes sont de son avis. De quelle maladie s'agit-il? On a nommé la migraine, la podagre, l'ophtalmie, le haut mal, diverses espèces de fièvre. Cette variété d'opinions prouve qu'un diagnostic sûr est impossible. Supposé que, dans l'Épître aux Galates, Paul fasse allusion à la même infirmité [Gal. IV, 13 Paul appelle la maladie qui l'oblige à rester parmi les Galates contre son dessein ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός, πειρασμός ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Il félicite les Galates de ne l'avoir pas repoussé (non sprevisistis, neque respuistis, οὐδὲ ἐξερύσαστε): de là certains critiques ont conclu qu'il était attaqué du haut mal, la coutume étant de cracher sur les épileptiques par dégoût ou par superstition. Il les remercie de s'être intéressés à sa guérison au point d'être prêts à lui donner jusqu'à leurs yeux: d'où la conclusion tirée par d'autres critiques encore plus subtils qu'il souffrait d'une ophtalmie] nous obtenons les symptômes suivants: 1. Le mal dont souffrait l'Apôtre devait être aigu et cuisant puisqu'il le désigne métaphoriquement par une épine ou un aiguillon enfoncé dans la chair. 2. Il devait avoir quelque chose de répugnant, car il remercie les Galates de ne pas s'être détournés de lui avec horreur. 3. Il devait être humiliant, car il le considère comme un antidote à la vaine gloire et comme un soufflet de Satan. 4. Enfin, il devait sembler faire obstacle à son

the peak of contemplation, must first prove his mettle by practicing good works." ⁴⁹

Richard of St. Victor says that good works, meditation, and prayer are the three means by which man may attain to contemplation. ⁵⁰

Seneca ⁵¹ writes: "We are wont to say that the highest good is to live according to nature. Nature has adapted us to both meditation and action. . . . Nature desires that I should do both—be active ⁵² and devote myself to contemplation. ⁵³ I do both, because even meditation is not without action."

Father Poulain summarizes the teaching of the most prudent ascetics by laying down seven rules for spiritual

apostolat puisque à trois reprises il supplia Dieu de l'en délivrer et ne cessa pas que sur cette assurance: 'Ma grâce te suffit.' Ulcère des yeux, malaria ou attaques nerveuses, le terme pathologique nous importe assez peu. Cf. Menzies Alexander, St. Paul's Infirmary dans The Expository Times, juillet et sept. 1904. Après avoir critiqué les hypothèses de ses prédécesseurs: 1. Ophtalmie aiguë (Howson, Lewin, Farrar, Plumpton, etc.); 2. épilepsie (Holsten, Ewald, Klöpfer, Lightfoot, Schmiedel, etc.); 3. malaria (Ramsay), l'auteur propose la sienne. Il s'agirait de la fièvre de Malte, connue à Gibraltar, à Naples, à Constantinople et répandue un peu partout sur le littoral méditerranéen. Les preuves ne sont pas très fortes, mais la critique des diverses opinions est intéressante." (La Théologie de Saint Paul, Vol. I, Paris 1908, pp. 216 sqq.).

⁴⁹ Moral., l. VI, c. 37, n. 59: "Qui culmen apprehendere perfectionis nituntur, quum contempla-

tionis arcem tenere desiderant, prius se in campo operis per exercitium probent."—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 60: "Actionis namque tempus primum est, contemplationis extremum. Unde necesse est, ut perfectus quisque prius virtutibus mentem exerceat atque hanc postmodum in horreum quietis condat." (Migne, P. L., LXXV, 763).

⁵⁰ *De Praeparatione Animi ad Contemplationem*, c. 79 (Migne, P. L., CXCVI, 56).

⁵¹ *De Otio*, V, 1, 8.—Cfr. St. Gregory the Great, *Moral.*, l. VI, c. 37, n. 61: "Quid per Mariam, quae verba Domini residens audiebat, nisi contemplativa vita exprimitur? Quid per Martham exterioribus obsequiis occupatam, nisi activa vita signatur? Sed Marthae cura non reprehenditur, Mariae vero etiam laudatur, quia magna sunt activae vitae merita, sed contemplativae potiora." (Migne, P. L., LXXV, 764).

⁵² *Agere.*

⁵³ *Contemplationi vacare.*

directors in regard to revelations and visions, and six rules for those who believe that they have received such extraordinary favors. The rules for the spiritual director are briefly:

(1) To resign himself to slow progress and be on his guard against his own precipitation and that of his penitent in judging of extraordinary occurrences.

(2) Not to display admiration for visions and revelations, even if they appear to him to be real.

(3) To be gentle in his treatment of the person. If the visions appear to him suspicious, not to show his distrust harshly, but strive with prudence to enlighten the supposed visionary.

(4) To bear in mind the end to which the visions, and especially the revelations, tend, exhibiting a proportionately stronger mistrust if it is a matter having consequences of greater magnitude.

(5) To strive after supernatural aims, always coming back to the question: What spiritual profit have you derived from the words you think you have heard or the things you imagine you have seen?

(6) To avoid the danger of allowing himself to be dominated by some one else or being carried away by sentimentality.

(7) To pray much and to make the person directed pray, in order to obtain the necessary illumination.

The rules for those who believe that they have received or are receiving revelations and visions are the following:

(1) Submit everything to a prudent spiritual director and be guided by his advice.

(2) Mistrust revelations, in general, and remember that this way is subject to illusions of the imagination or

the devil. Even if a vision appears to be divine, mistrust the interpretation that is given.

(3) Do not ask or desire this kind of grace because it is very conducive to illusions.

(4) In the beginning, at any rate, gently do your utmost to repel the revelations and turn your thoughts away from them.

(5) If you believe a corporeal apparition of Our Lord or of the saints to be the work of the devil, do not go to the length of insulting or treating it with contempt, any more than you would a sacred picture that had been painted by a scoundrel.

(6) If, in spite of yourself, you have visions, be chiefly concerned in making them serve your progress in virtue; for if they come of God, you will thus have attained the sole end that is desired, whereas in the contrary case they cannot harm you.⁵⁴

READINGS.—K. Martin, *Lehrbuch der kath. Moral*, 5th ed., pp. 447 sqq., 453 sqq.—G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet nach der Lehre der Heiligen*, Vol. I, pp. 46 sqq., pp. 88 sqq.; Vol. II, pp. 21 sqq.; Freiburg 1874.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, Freiburg 1881, pp. 84 sqq.

J. Roothan, S.J., *De Ratione Meditandi*, Rome 1871.—F. Hettinger, *Die Idee der geistlichen Uebungen*, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1908.—F. De Hummelauer, S.J., *Medit. et Contempl. S. Ignatii de Loyola*, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1909.—G. Bucceroni, S.J., *S. Ignacio de Loyola*, Rome 1901.—P. Watrigant, *La Genèse des Exercices de S. Ignace de Loyola*, Amiens 1897.—K. Holl, *Die geistlichen Uebungen des Ignatius von Loyola*, Tübingen 1905.—R. de Maumigny, *Pratique de l'Oraison Mentale*, Paris 1905.—M. Meschler, S.J., *Das Leben unsres Herrn Jesu Christi*, 7th ed., Freiburg 1910 (English tr. by Sister Mary Margaret, O. S. B., *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 vols., London).—Hettinger-Stepka, *Timothy, or Letters to a Young Theologian*, St. Louis 1902, pp. 283 sqq.—F. Chatel, *De l'Oraison Mentale*,

⁵⁴ Poulain, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, pp. 380 sqq.

Louvain 1909, pp. 24 sqq.—Jos. Zahn, *Einführung in die christliche Mystik*, Paderborn 1908, pp. 163 sqq.—F. X. Mutz, *Christliche Aszetik*, Paderborn, 2nd ed., pp. 151 sqq.

A. Saudreau, *Les Faits Extraordinaires de la Vie Spirituelle*, Angers and Paris 1908.—Stöhr-Kannamüller, *Handbuch der Pastoralmedizin*, 5th ed., Freiburg 1909, pp. 555 sqq.—I. Familler, *Pastoral-Psychiatrie*, Freiburg 1898, pp. 66, 69.

Philip a SS. Trinitate, *Summa Theol. Mysticae*, Freiburg 1875.—F. Hettinger, *De Theologiae Speculativae et Mysticae Connubio in Dantis praesertim Trilogia*, Würzburg 1882.—G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, Vol. II, pp. 427 sqq.—J. B. Scaramelli, *Discernimento de' Spiriti per il Retto Regolamento delle Azione Proprie ed Altrui*, Venice 1753; 7th ed., Rome 1866 (Spanish tr., Madrid 1804; German tr., Mayence 1861, 3rd ed., Ratisbon 1904).

St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 179–180.—D. Schram, O.S.B., *Instit. Theol. Myst.*, 2nd ed., Paris 1868.—Aug. Poulain, S.J., *Des Grâces d'Oraison*, 5th ed., Paris 1906 (English tr. by Leonora L. Yorke Smith, *The Graces of Interior Prayer*, 2nd ed., London, s. a.)—J. Ries, *Das geistliche Leben*, pp. 275 sqq.—G. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, Vol. II, pp. 410 sqq.—Jos. Zahn, *Einführung in die christliche Mystik*, pp. 186 sqq.—F. Chatel, *De l'Oraison Mentale*, pp. 399 sqq.—G. Byrne, "Right and Wrong Notions of Prayer," in *The Month*, No. 682 (April, 1921), pp. 309–316.

For a full list of Catholic writers on mystic theology see Aug. Poulain, S.J., *The Graces of Interior Prayer* (English ed.), pp. 591–620.

CHAPTER V

VARIOUS FORMS OF PRAYER

Though every true prayer is a prayer "in spirit and in truth," the use of set forms or formulas in conversing with God is by no means forbidden. On the contrary, the Old Testament contains at least the rudiments of several such formulas,¹ and in the New, Christ Himself gave us a model in the Our Father.² That this and other forms of prayer were employed by the early Christians is evident from the Acts of the Apostles.³

The use of set forms of prayer corresponds to a deep-rooted need of human nature. Most men could not comply with the duty of praying and satisfy their spiritual needs without employing definite sets of words.

We proceed to a brief consideration of some of the most important formulas in use in the Catholic Church, such as the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, the Rosary, the Creed, etc.

I. THE LORD'S PRAYER.—The Pater Noster (Our Father) was inculcated by Our Divine

¹ Deut. XXVI, 5 sqq., 13-15.

³ Acts I, 24; IV, 24-30.

² Matt. VI, 9 sqq.; Luke XI, 2

sqq.

Lord Himself and is therefore fittingly called the Lord's Prayer (*oratio dominica* or *dominicalis*).⁴ It is the most beautiful and the most sacred of all known prayers, because of its origin and because it includes all the various objects of prayer (praise, thanksgiving, propitiation, and intercession) and the necessities of the Christian wayfarer; is replete with the true spirit of devotion (consciousness of being one with God, reverence for Him as the Ruler of Heaven and earth, resignation to His will, unselfish participation in the prosperity of the entire human race, the feeling of guilt) and, finally, combines a wealth of sublime ideas with brevity and simplicity of diction.⁵

⁴ Matt. VI, 9-13; Luke XI, 1-4.

⁵ The Latin term *oratio dominica* is of early date. The phrase Lord's Prayer, according to Fr. Thurston (*Cath. Encycl.*, IX, 356), "does not seem to have been generally familiar in England before the Reformation. During the Middle Ages the 'Our Father' was always said in Latin, even by the uneducated. Hence it was then most commonly known as the Pater noster." With regard to the English text now in use among Catholics, the same author says: "We may note that this is derived not from the Rheims Testament but from a version imposed upon England in the reign of Henry VIII, and employed in the 1549 and 1552 editions of the 'Book of Common Prayer.' From this our present Catholic text differs only in two very slight particulars: 'Which art' has been modernized into 'who art,'

and 'in earth' into 'on earth.' The version itself, which accords pretty closely with the translation in Tyn-dale's New Testament, no doubt owed its general acceptance to an ordinance of 1541, according to which 'His Grace perceiving now the great diversity of the translations [of the Pater noster etc.] hath willed them all to be taken up, and instead of them hath caused an uniform translation of the said Pater noster, Ave, Creed, etc., to be set forth, willing all his loving subjects to learn and use the same and straitly commanding all parsons, vicars, and curates to read and teach the same to their parishioners.' As a result the version in question became universally familiar to the nation, and though the Rheims Testament, in 1581, and King James's translators, in 1611, provided somewhat different renderings of Matt.

In prescribing this prayer, however, our Lord did not mean to forbid the use of others. If this were not evident from Sacred Scripture, it could be legitimately concluded from the practice of the

VI, 9-13, the older form was retained for their prayers both by Protestants and Catholics alike" (l. c.)—Tertullian, *De Orat.*, c. 1: "*Iesus Christus, Dominus noster, nobis discipulis novi Testamenti novam orationis formam determinavit. . . . Et quid non caeleste quod Domini Christi est, ut haec quoque orandi disciplina? Consideremus itaque, benedicti, caelestem eius sapientiam, imprimis de praecepto secrete adorandi, quo et fidem hominis exigebat, ut Dei omnipotentis et conspectum et auditum sub tectis et in additis etiam adesse confideret, et modestiam fidei desiderabat, ut quem ubique audire et videre fideret, ei soli religionem suam offerret. Sequentem sophia in sequenti praecepto: quod etsi proinde pertineat ad fidem et modestiam fidei, si non agmine verborum adeundum putemus ad Dominum, quem ultro suis prospicere certi sumus. Attamen brevitatis ista, quod ad tertium sophiae gradum faciat, magnae ac beatae interpretationis substantia fulta est, quantumque substringitur verbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus. Neque enim propria tantum orationis officia complexa est, venerationem Dei aut hominis petitionem, sed omnem paene sermonem Domini, omnem commemorationem disciplinae, ut revera in oratione brevitarium totius evangelii comprehendatur.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, c. 9: "*Compendiis paucorum verborum quot attinguntur edicta prophetarum, evangeliorum, apostolorum, sermones Domini, parabolae, exempla, praecepta! Quot simul expunguntur officia! Dei honor in Patre,*

fidei testimonium in nomine, oblatio obsequii in voluntate, commemoratio spei in regno, petitio vitae in pane, exomologesis debitorum in deprecatione, sollicitudo tentationum in postulatione tutelae. Quid mirum? Deus solus docere potuit, ut se vellet orari. Ab ipso igitur ordinata religio orationis et de spiritu ipsius iam tunc, cum ex ore divino ferretur, animata suo privilegio ascendit in caelum, commendans Patri quae Filius docuit." (Ed. E. F. Leopold, P. II, pp. 1 sq., 6).—St. Cyprian, *De Dominica Orat.*, c. 9: "*Qualia sunt . . . orationis dominicae sacramenta, quam multa, quam magna, breviter in sermone collecta, sed in virtute spiritualiter copiosa, ut nihil omnino praetermissum sit, quod non in precibus atque orationibus nostris caelestis doctrinae compendio comprehendatur.*" (*Corpus Script. Eccles. Lat.*, Vol. III, 1, 272).—Innocent III, *Expositio Orat. Domini*, n. 1: "*Oratio haec privilegiata est in tribus: in dignitate, quia a Christo composita; in brevitate, ut citius sciatur, melius retineatur et frequentius dicatur; in fecunditate, quia omnes petitiones continet et utriusque vitae necessaria complectitur.*"—St. Bonaventure, *De Sacro Altaris Mysterio*, l. V, c. 16 (*Opera Omnia*, VII, 652): "*Haec oratio multis ex causis ceteris orationibus antecellit: auctoritate doctoris, brevitate sermonis, sufficientiâ petitionum et fecunditate mysteriorum. Auctoritate doctoris, quia fuit ipsius ore prolata (Is. i, 20). Brevitate sermonis, quia facile dicitur et profertur (Mt. vi, 7). Sufficientiâ peti-*

Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers, who employed other prayers besides the Pater Noster.⁶ Nevertheless, it is true that the Lord's Prayer is preëminently the prayer of Christians and constitutes both the norm and the basis of all others.⁷

"In the Lord's Prayer," says Aquinas, "we pray not only for all the things we may licitly desire, but also in the order in which we must desire them," and consequently this prayer is the standard and rule of human conduct.⁸

tionum, quoniam utriusque vitæ continet necessaria (1 Tim. iv, 8). *Fecunditate mysteriorum, quoniam immensa continet sacramenta* (Deut. xii, 4). (Migne, P. L., CCXVII, 897).—Cfr. Tillmann, *Das Gebet*, II, 18 sqq.

⁶ Acts I, 24-30; IV, 24; Eph. III, 14-21.—St. Justin Martyr, *Apol.*, I, c. 65; *Dial. c. Tryph.*, c. 35 (ed. de Otto, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 155).—Cfr. *Constit. Apost.*, l. VII, c. 24 sqq., 33 sqq., 47 sqq. (ed. Funk, I, 408 sqq.).—St. Chrysostom, *Hom. in Matth.*, 55 (Migne, P. G., LVIII, 561).

⁷ Matt. VI, 9 sqq., Luke XI, 1 sqq.—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 130 (al. 121), c. 12, n. 22: "*Quaelibet alia verba dicamus, quæ affectus orantis vel præcedendo format, ut clareat, vel consequendo attendit, ut crescat, nihil aliud dicimus, quam quod in ista dominica oratione positum est, si recte et congruenter oramus. . . . Si per omnia precationum sanctarum verba discurras, quantum existimo, nihil invenies, quod in ista dominica non contineatur oratione. Unde liberum est aliis atque aliis verbis eadem tamen in orando dicere, sed non debet esse liberum alia dicere.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIII, 502 sq.).—IDEM, *Serm.*, 56 (al. 48 de

Div.), c. 3, n. 4: "*Verba, quæ Dominus noster Iesus Christus in oratione docuit, forma est desiderorum. Non tibi licet petere aliud quam quod ibi scriptum est.*" (P. L., XXXVIII, 379).

⁸ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 83, art. 9: "*In oratione dominica non solum petuntur omnia, quæ recte desiderare possumus, sed etiam ordine, quo desideranda sunt; ut sic hæc oratio non solum instruat postulare, sed etiam sit informativa totius nostri affectus. Manifestum est autem, quod primo cadit in desiderio nostro finis, deinde ea, quæ sunt ad finem. Finis autem noster Deus est, in quem noster affectus tendit dupliciter: uno quidem modo, prout volumus gloriam Dei; alio modo, secundum quod volumus frui gloriâ eius; quorum primum pertinet ad dilectionem, quâ Deum in seipso diligimus; secundum vero pertinet ad dilectionem, quâ diligimus nos in Deo. Et ideo prima petitio ponitur: 'Sanctificetur nomen tuum,' per quam petimus gloriam Dei; secunda vero ponitur: 'Adveniat regnum tuum,' per quam petimus ad gloriam regni eius pervenire. Ad finem autem prædictum nos ordinat aliquid dupliciter: uno modo per se, alio modo per accidens; per se qui-*

St. Augustine taught us to distinguish in the Lord's Prayer seven petitions, three of which are directed to the glory of God, while the remaining four have reference to our own salvation.⁹

dem bonum, quod est utile in finem. Est autem aliquid utile in finem beatitudinis dupliciter: uno modo directe et principaliter, secundum meritum, quo beatitudinem mere-mur Deo obediendo; et quantum ad hoc ponitur: 'Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo et in terra.' Alio modo instrumentaliter, et quasi coadiuvans nos ad merendum; et ad hoc pertinet, quod dicitur: 'Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie': sive hoc intelligatur de pane sacramentali, cuius quotidianus usus proficit homini, in quo etiam intelliguntur omnia alia sacramenta; sive etiam intellegatur de pane corporali, ut per panem intellegatur omnis sufficientia victus, sicut dicit Augustinus ad Probam, quia et Eucharistia est praecipuum sacramentum, et panis est praecipuus cibus; unde et in evangelio Matthaei scriptum est: 'Supersubstantialem,' idest, 'praecipuum,' ut Hieronymus exponit, superiorem. Matth. Per accidens autem Ordinamur in beatitudinem per remotionem prohibentis. Tria autem sunt, quae nos a beatitudine prohibent; primo quidem peccatum, quod directe excludit a regno, secundum illud 1 ad Cor. 6, 9: 'Neque fornicarii neque idolis servientes, etc., regnum Dei possidebunt'; et ad hoc pertinet, quod dicitur: 'Et ne nos inducas in tentationem,' per quod non petimus, ut non tentemur, sed ut a tentatione non vincamur, quod est in tentationem induci. Tertio poenalitas praesens, ut quae impedit sufficientiam vitae; et quantum ad hoc dicitur: 'Libera nos a malo.'

⁹ For an elaborate commentary

upon the Lord's Prayer see the Catechism of the Council of Trent (English tr. by J. Donovan, Dublin, 1908, which we use throughout this work wherever we quote from the *Cat. Rom.*). This quasi-official commentary, as Fr. Thurston points out (*Cath. Encycl.*, IX, 356), forms the basis of the analysis of the Our Father found in all Catholic catechisms. "Many points worthy of notice are there emphasized, as, for example, the fact that the words 'on earth as it is in Heaven' should be understood to qualify, not only the petition 'Thy will be done,' but also the two preceding, 'hallowed be Thy name,' and 'Thy kingdom come.' The meaning of this last petition is also very fully dealt with. The most conspicuous difficulty in the original text of the Our Father concerns the interpretation of the words *ἄpros ἐπιούσιος*, which in accordance with the Vulgate in St. Luke, we translate 'our daily bread.' St. Jerome, by a strange inconsistency, changed the pre-existing word *quotidianum* into *supersubstantialem* in St. Matthew, but left *quotidianum* in St. Luke. The opinion of modern scholars upon the point is sufficiently indicated by the fact that the Revised Version still prints 'daily' in the text, but suggests in the margin 'our bread for the coming day,' while the American Committee wished to add 'our needful bread.' Lastly may be noted the generally received opinion that the rendering of the last clause should be 'deliver us from the evil one,' a change which justifies the use of 'but' instead of 'and' and practically converts the

As the Pater noster comprises everything for which man may and should pray, and the arrangement of its petitions indicates the correct order in which these blessings should be asked for, this prayer has from the earliest days, according to the testimony of Tertullian, been regarded as "the legitimate and ordinary prayer," "the public and common prayer" of the faithful.¹⁰

2. THE HAIL MARY.—The Hail Mary, or Ave Maria, also called the "Angelical Salutation," is as a rule recited immediately after the Our Father. It is the most familiar of all the prayers used by the Universal Church in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary and consists of three parts.

two last clauses into one and the same petition." The doxology, "for Thine is the Kingdom," etc., which appears in the Greek *textus receptus* and has been adopted into the later editions of the "Book of Common Prayer," is an interpolation of ancient but uncertain origin. The words "*quoniam tuum est regnum et virtus et gloria*" are found in many ancient codices, both Greek and Latin, of St. Matthew's Gospel, in the writings of St. John Chrysostom, and in those of St. Gregory of Nyssa. Hence, if there is an interpolation, it cannot be charged against the editors of the King James or any other Protestant version, because the incriminated passage antedates Protestantism by more than a thousand years. Our best authorities hold that the phrase is a liturgical addition, which at an early period slipped into the sacred text through some copyist's error. Such doxologies were recited in the early days after every prayer and sermon. Knaben-

bauer (*Comment. in Matt.*, Vol. I, ed. alt., p. 280, Paris, 1903) traces this custom to St. Paul. The meaning attached to the phrase, "Thine is the kingdom," etc., by the Fathers was: "Thou, O Lord, art able to grant us the things we have asked for in this prayer, because thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. "Kingdom," St. Thomas explains, refers to the first and second petitions of the Lord's Prayer, "power" to the third, and "glory" to the rest. (Quoted by Knabenbauer, *l. c.*) (Cfr. the Catholic *Fortnightly Review*, St. Louis, Mo., Vol. XXII [1915], pp. 494 sq.).

¹⁰ St. Augustine, *De Sermone Domini in Monte*, l. II, c. 4-11 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, 1275 sqq.); *Idem*, *Serm.*, 56 (*al. 48 de Div.*), c. 4-14 (*P. L.*, XXXVIII, 379 sqq.); Tertullian, *De Orat.*, c. 9; St. Cyprian, *De Dominica Orat.*, c. 8; cfr. O. Rottmanner, O. S. B., *Predigten und Ansprachen*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 3 sqq.

The first, "Hail [Mary], full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women," embodies the salutation of the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation.¹¹ The second, "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb [Jesus]," is borrowed from the divinely inspired greeting of St. Elizabeth.¹² The third is a petition: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, Amen." This petition dates no farther back than the fifteenth century.¹³

¹¹ Luke I, 28.

¹² Luke I, 42.

¹³ "At the close of the fifteenth century," says Fr. Herbert Thurston, S.J., "there was not any officially approved conclusion, though a form closely resembling our present one was sometimes designated as 'the prayer of Pope Alexander VI' (see *Der Katholik*, April, 1903, p. 334), and was engraved separately on bells (Beissel, *Verehrung Marias*, p. 460). But for liturgical purposes the Ave down to the year 1568 ended with 'Jesus, Amen,' and an observation in the *Myroure of Our Lady*, written for the Bridgettine nuns of Syon, clearly indicates the general feeling. 'Some saye at the begynnyng of this salutacyon *Ave benigne Jesu* and some saye after '*Maria mater Dei*,' with other addycyons at the ende also. And such thinges may be saide when folke saye their Aves of theyr own devocyon. But in the servyce of the chyrche, I trowe it to be moste sewer and moste medeful [*i.e.*, meritorious] to obey the comon use of saying, as the chyrche hath set, without all such addicions.' We meet the Ave as we know it now,

printed in the breviary of the Camaldolese monks, and in that of the Order de Mercede, c. 1514. Probably this, the current form of Ave, came from Italy, and Esser asserts that it is to be found, written exactly as we say it now, in the handwriting of St. Antoninus of Florence, who died in 1459. This, however, is doubtful. What is certain is that an Ave Maria identical with our own, except for the omission of the single word *nostrae*, stands printed at the head of a little work of Savonarola's issued in 1495, of which there is a copy in the British Museum. Even earlier than this, in a French edition of the 'Calendar of Shepherds,' which appeared in 1493, a third part is added to the Hail Mary, which is repeated in Pynson's English translation a few years later in the form: 'Holy Mary moder of God praye for us synners. Amen.' . . . The official recognition of the Ave Maria in its complete form, though foreshadowed in the words of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, . . . was finally given in the Roman Breviary of 1568." (*Cath. Enycl.*, VII, 112). The custom of engraving the Ave

By adding the Hail Mary to the Our Father we intimate that we expect God to hear our prayers through the powerful intercession of His Blessed Mother.¹⁴

3. THE ANGELUS.—A triple Hail Mary recited in the evening was the origin of our modern Angelus, which is closely associated with the ringing of a bell.¹⁵

The Church does not oblige her children to say the Angelus, but merely expresses the wish that they should recite the usual prayer when they hear the bell ringing in the morning, at noon, and at night. This is a pious and salutary custom, calculated to sanctify the workaday life of the Christian in its three principal stages,—the beginning, the continuation, and the end. Thrice daily the Angelus bell calls upon man amid his cares and worries to raise his heart to God, thereby sanctifying his daily life. “Evening and morning, and at noon I will speak and declare, and he shall hear my voice.”¹⁶ The Angelus bell reminds us of the *magnum pietatis mysterium*, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and exhorts us to honor with a grateful heart the Saviour and His Blessed Mother, that they may protect us from the dangers that threaten us,—in the morning, from “the

Maria on bells, referred to by Fr. Thurston, arose from its connection with the Angelus.

¹⁴ In the Middle Ages the Ave Maria often became so closely connected with the Pater noster, that it was treated as a sort of *farsura*, or insertion, before the words *et ne nos inducas in tentationem*, when the Pater noster was said *secreto*. (See H. Thurston, S.J., in *The Month*, Nov., 1901, p. 490).

¹⁵ See H. Thurston, S.J., in the

Catholic Encyclopedia, I, 487. The tolling of the Ave bell was not identical with the ringing of the *curfew*, as has been asserted. The former took place at the end of the ecclesiastical office of Compline and perhaps coincided with the prayers for peace, said in choir; whereas the curfew was the signal for the close of day and for the general bedtime. (Thurston, *ibid.*).

¹⁶ Ps. LIV, 18.

arrow that flieth in the day";¹⁷ at noon, from the "invasion of the midday devil,"¹⁸ and in the evening, from the danger that lurks in the dark.¹⁹

4. THE ROSARY.—The Rosary (*Rosarium*, *Psalterium Marianum*) is a form of prayer consisting in the recitation of fifteen decades of Hail Marys with an Our Father between each ten, while at each of the fifteen decades we recall successively in pious meditation one of the mysteries of our Redemption.²⁰ The characteristic mark or essence of this form of prayer lies in the meditations. Oral prayer and meditation are here combined like matter and form.

The name Rosary originated in the idea that the sacred mysteries of the Redemption constitute for the Blessed Virgin Mary a constantly new source of honor and happiness, symbolized in ancient times by the rose. The frequent repetition of the Angelical Salutation resembles a wreath wound about the head of the glorious Queen, who crushed the head of the serpent. The meditations are as roses inserted in this wreath.

The connection of the so-called mysteries with the Hail Mary arose from the consideration that the graces which Christ merited for us by His life, Passion, and death are communicated most effectively through the intercession of His Virgin Mother, who is to be thought of as coöperating in all these mysteries. Through this association of ideas the Rosary becomes perfectly in-

¹⁷ "*A sagitta volante in die*" (Ps. XC, 6).

¹⁸ "*Ab incursu et daemonio meridiano*" (ibid.).

¹⁹ "*A negotio perambulante in tenebris*" (ibid.).

²⁰ *Breviarium Romanum*.

telligible for the unlearned layman, while, on the other hand, even the most learned theologian cannot exhaust its mysteries. The Rosary is a devotion that is suitable for all conditions of life, and satisfies all needs of the human heart. It is a most excellent accompaniment for the ecclesiastical seasons. The ease with which it leads the faithful to meditate, and the necessity of meditation for spiritual progress, render it invaluable for all. The frequent repetition of the same prayer does not weary the mind, because the mysteries meditated upon bring variety into what might otherwise be a monotonous practice. On the contrary, by repeating the Hail Mary, we increase and intensify our devotion.

These considerations explain the popularity of this beautiful devotion.²¹ There can be no doubt that the Rosary, rightly recited, is a veritable wellspring of pious aspirations.

We do not, of course, mean to deny that this devotion involves the danger of thoughtlessness and routine, but to condemn the Rosary because of the real or possible abuses to which it gives rise, would be unjust. The danger of its becoming a matter of mechanical routine can be easily averted by proper instruction on the nature of prayer and the meaning of the sacred mysteries.

It was long a pious belief among the faithful that when the Albigensian heresy was devastating the country of Toulouse, St. Dominic earnestly besought the help of Our Lady and was instructed by her to preach the Rosary among the people as an antidote to heresy and sin. From this time forward, the Breviary informs us,²²

²¹ *Kirchen-Lexikon*, Vol. X, col. 1275 sq.—Cfr. Leo XIII's Encyclical letters: "*Supremi Apostolatus*," Sept. 1, 1883; "*Octobris mense adventante*," Sept. 22, 1891; "*Adiutricem populi christiani*," Sept. 5,

1895; "*Fidentem piumque animum*," Sept. 20, 1896.

²² Office for the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, Oct. 7, second nocturn.

this manner of prayer "was most wonderfully published abroad and developed by St. Dominic, whom [different] supreme pontiffs have in various passages of their Apostolic letters declared to be the institutor and author of the same devotion." In matter of fact neither the thirteenth nor the fourteenth century knew anything of St. Dominic's alleged relation to the Rosary. Not a single authentic passage can be cited from the historical, ascetical, or homiletic writings of Dominican authors during these two centuries that could be construed into a reference to the Rosary, whereas since the beginning of the fifteenth century whole cycles of Rosary sermons occur. "It would be difficult to understand," says a learned Franciscan historian, Fr. Heribert Holzapfel, "why the Rosary is never even mentioned in the most ancient constitutions and decrees of the Dominican Order in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, if it were really a form of devotion recommended and inculcated by the holy founder. The *Constitutiones Primae* of 1228 contain so many detailed instructions regarding prayers and devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that one is compelled to assume that the Rosary would surely have been mentioned had it been a part of the regular practice of the Order."²³

"The Bollandists, on trying to trace to its source the origin of the current tradition," says Fr. Thurston, "found that all the clues converged upon one point, the preaching of the Dominican Alan de Rupe, about the years 1470-75. He it undoubtedly was who first suggested the idea that the devotion of 'Our Lady's Psalter' was instituted or revived by St. Dominic. Alan was a very earnest and devout man, but, as the highest au-

²³ Heribert Holzapfel, O. F. M., *St. Dominikus und der Rosenkranz*, Munich 1903, pp. 11 sq., 14, 26; see, however, R. Devas, O. P., in *Am. Cath. Quarterly Rev.*, Jan. 1916 and *Cath. Fortnightly Review*, 1920, Vol. XXVII, No. 23.

thorities admit, he was full of delusions, and based his revelations on the imaginary testimony of writers that never existed.²⁴ His preaching, however, was attended with much success. The Rosary confraternities, organized by him and his colleagues at Douai, Cologne, and elsewhere,²⁵ had great vogue, and led to the printing of many books, all more or less impregnated with the ideas of Alan. Indulgences were granted for the good work that was thus being done, and the documents conceding these indulgences accepted and repeated, as was natural in that uncritical age, the historical data which had been inspired by Alan's writings and which were submitted according to the usual practice by the promoters of the confraternities themselves. It was in this way that the tradition of Dominican authorship grew up. The first Bulls speak of this authorship with some reserve: '*Prout in historiis legitur*,' says Leo X in the earliest of all, '*Pastoris aeterni*,' 1520; but many of the later popes were less guarded."²⁶

"That the Rosary is preëminently the prayer of the people," says the same writer, "adapted alike for the use of simple and learned, is proved not only by the long series of papal utterances by which it has been commended to the faithful, but by the daily experience of all who are familiar with it. The objection so often made against its 'vain repetition,' is felt by none but those who have failed to realize how entirely the spirit of the exercise lies in the meditation upon the fundamental mysteries of our faith."²⁷ To the initiated the words

²⁴ Quétif and Echard, *Script. O. P.*, I, 849.

²⁵ *Cath. Encyclopedia*, XIII, 188 sq.

²⁶ H. Thurston, S.J., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, p. 186.

²⁷ Cfr. J. H. Newman, "Vain Repetitions," reprinted from *The Rambler*, Vol. IV, No. 21 (Sept. 1855), St. Louis 1910,

of the Angelical Salutation form only a sort of half-conscious accompaniment, a bourdon which we may liken to the 'Holy, Holy, Holy' of the heavenly choirs and surely not in itself meaningless. Neither can it be necessary to urge that the freest criticism of the historical origin of the devotion, which involves no point of doctrine, is compatible with a full appreciation of the devotional treasures which this pious exercise brings within the reach of all."²⁸

5. THE SALVE REGINA.—The Salve Regina, the most celebrated of the four Breviary anthems in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is usually ascribed to St. Bernard of Clairvaux, but is probably the work of Hermannus Contractus.²⁹ The use of this anthem at Compline was begun by the Dominicans about 1221, and before the middle of the thirteenth century the Salve Regina was incorporated with the other anthems of the Blessed Virgin in the "modernized" Franciscan Breviary, whence it made its way into the Roman Breviary. The Salve Regina figured largely in the evening devotions of the confraternities and guilds which were formed about the beginning of the thirteenth century. In France it was known as *Salut*, in the Netherlands as the *Lof*, in England and Germany simply as the *Salve*. Fr. Thurston has made it seem certain that our present Benediction service has resulted from the general adoption of this evening singing of canticles before the statue of Our Lady.³⁰

6. THE CREED.—The so-called *Apostles' Creed* is a formula containing in brief statements or

²⁸ Thurston in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, p. 187.

²⁹ On Hermannus Contractus see H. P. Schlager in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. VII, p. 266.

³⁰ Cfr. H. T. Henry in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIII, pp. 40 sqq., with bibliography.

“articles” the fundamental doctrines of Christian belief. Tradition ascribes it to the Twelve Apostles; hence the name. The legend dates back to the sixth century and is foreshadowed still earlier in a sermon attributed to St. Ambrose.³¹ About the year 400 Rufinus gives a detailed account of the composition of the Creed, which he professes to have received from earlier ages.³² Recently Harnack and other Protestant critics have assigned to the Creed an origin much later than the Apostolic age. Semeria, Battifol, Thurston and other Catholic authorities hold that while the Apostolic composition of the Creed cannot be proved, to deny the possibility of such origin is to go further than our data at present warrant.³³

While the recitation of the Creed is essentially an act of latreutic worship, namely, confession and adoration, it also partakes of the character of an impetration, and consequently is really and truly a prayer.³⁴ For as faith itself is a gift of

31 Migne, P. L., XVII, 671.

32 Migne, P. L., XXI, 337.

33 Thurston in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 631.

34 St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, c. 7: “Ecce tibi est symbolum et dominica oratio. Quid brevius auditur et legitur? Quid facilius memoriae commendatur? Quia enim de peccato gravi miseria premebatur genus humanum et divina indigebat misericordia gratiae Dei tempus propheta praedicens ait: ‘Et erit;

omnis qui invocaverit nomen Domini, salvus erit’ (Ioel ii, 32); propter hoc oratio. Sed Apostolus, quum ad ipsam gratiam commendandam hoc propheticum commemorasset testimonium, continuo subiecit: ‘Quomodo autem invocabunt, in quem non crediderunt?’ (Rom. x, 14); propter hoc symbolum. In his duobus tria illa intueri: fides credit, spes et caritas orant.” (Migne, P. L., XL, 243).

divine grace, and can be professed only with the help of God, so the act of faith which consists in the devout recitation of the Creed undoubtedly is a means of obtaining additional graces.

As the so-called Apostles' Creed has a place in the canonical hours, and in the rites of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Orders, so the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed is used in the ritual of the Mass, and the so-called Athanasian Creed in the Roman Breviary.

The *Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed* is substantially the symbolum of Nicaea as approved in amplified form by the Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381. The Council of Chalcedon (451) designated it as "The Creed of the Council of Constantinople of 381" and inserted it in its acts. It is the profession of Christian faith common to the Catholic Church, to all the Eastern churches separated from Rome, and to most Protestant denominations.³⁵ The schismatic Greeks cherish it with almost superstitious reverence as their inviolable and sole norm of faith.³⁶

The *Athanasian Creed* ("*Quicumque*"), so called because its authorship was attributed to St. Athanasius, is of uncertain origin, but was probably compiled in the fourth century under Atha-

³⁵ J. Wilhelm in the *Cath. Encyclopaedia*, Vol. XI, pp. 49 sq.

Trinity, 3rd ed., St. Louis 1919, pp. 129 sq.

³⁶ Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *The Divine*

nasian influences. It not only states clearly what the Catholic faith is concerning the important doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, but asserts with equal plainness and precision what will happen to those who do not faithfully and steadfastly believe these truths.³⁷

7. THE ORATIO COMMUNIS.—The general prayers said publicly in many churches on Sundays and holydays of obligation for the peace and prosperity of Christendom are based upon the admonition of St. Paul “that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and for all that are in high station: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all piety and chastity; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”³⁸ This common prayer corresponds to the idea of the Church of Christ as the one institution destined to lead all men without distinction of nationality to Heaven, and is therefore believed to have special power. “If the prayer of one or two of us has such might,” says St. Ignatius of Antioch, “how much more has that of the bishop and of the whole Church?”³⁹

³⁷ *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, pp.

³⁸ sq.

³⁸ 1 Tim. II, 1-4; cfr. Acts II, 42; Rom. X, 12.

³⁹ *Epist. ad Eph.*, c. 5: *Εἰ γὰρ ἑνὸς καὶ δευτέρου προσευχὴ τοσαύτην ἰσχύϊν ἔχει, πόσω μᾶλλον ἢ τε τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ πάσης τῆς*

8. LITANIES.—The word Litany (λιτάνεια) is derived from λιτή, *i. e.*, an entreaty, or a supplication, and designates a form of united prayer by alternate sentences, in which the clergy lead and the people respond. These sentences embody petitions directed to God, or to the Saints, chiefly for the purpose of obtaining the divine assistance in important matters affecting either the Church or the faithful, or of appeasing God's just wrath in calamities.⁴⁰

There are five litanies approved by the Holy See for use in public worship, *viz.*:

a) THE LITANY OF THE SAINTS (*Litaniae Sanctorum*), so called because in it Saints of every class and rank are either nominally or by implication asked for their intercession. This Litany is of great antiquity and has served as a model for all others.

Three forms of the Litany of the Saints are at present in liturgical use. The longer form, as given in the Roman Ritual, is prescribed for the laying of the cornerstone of a new church, at the blessing or reconciliation of a church or cemetery, in the rite of blessing the people and fields by virtue of a special papal indult,

ἐκκλησίας; (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 216; Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers* (Loeb Classical Library), Vol. I, London 1912, p. 178).—Cfr. Tertullian, *Apol.*, c. 39: "*Coimus in coetum et congregationem, ut ad Deum quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus orantes. Haec vis Deo grata est. Oramus*

etiam pro imperatoribus, pro ministris eorum ac potestatibus, pro statu saeculi, pro rerum quiete, pro mora finis." (Ed. Leopold, P. I, 110).

40 F. Mersham, O.S.B., in the *Cath. Encyclopædia*, Vol. IX, pp. 286 sq.

for the major and minor Rogation days, in the procession and prayers to obtain rain or fine weather, to avert storms and tempests, in time of famine or war, to escape mortality in time of pestilence, in any tribulation, during the translation of relics, in solemn exorcisms, and at the Forty Hours' Devotion, on which latter occasion certain verses are added. The Roman Pontifical, besides the occasions given in the Ritual, orders the recitation of the Litany of the Saints in the conferring of major orders, in the consecration of a bishop, the benediction of an abbot or abbess, the consecration of virgins, the coronation of a king or queen, the consecration of a church, the expulsion and readmission of public sinners on Maundy Thursday, and in the "*Ordo ad Synodum*."⁴¹

An abbreviated form of this Litany is given in the Roman Missal for Holy Saturday and the Vigil of Pentecost.

A third form occurs in the "*Commendatio*" of the Roman Ritual, in which the invocations and supplications are specially chosen to benefit the departing soul about to appear before its Maker.

b) THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, popularly known as the LITANY OF LORETO (*Litaniae Lauretanae B. Mariae Virginis*), in which titles expressive of the transcendent dignity and the various privileges of the Mother of God, as well as of the love, trust, and veneration of her children toward her, are woven into a chain of animated supplications which have been the subject of endless panegyrics.

⁴¹ IDEM, *ibid.*, IX, 292.

This Litany came into general use from having been sung in the Holy House of Loreto, whence pilgrims carried it into all Christian lands. It was definitely approved by the Church in 1587, but a considerable portion of it is undoubtedly much older than the foundation of the Loreto sanctuary, which dates only from the thirteenth century.

"The first Marian litanies must have been composed to foster private devotion, as it is not at all probable that they were written for use in public, by reason of their drawn-out and heavy style. But once the custom grew up of reciting Marian litanies privately, and of gradually shortening the text, it was not long until the idea occurred of employing them for public devotion, especially in cases of epidemic, as had been the practice of the Church with the litanies of the Saints, which were sung in penitential processions and during public calamities." ⁴²

c) THE LITANY OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS (*Litaniae Sanctissimi Nominis Iesu*) enumerates a list of praises referring to Jesus as God and man, and begs Him to deliver us from whatever is apt to keep us from attaining our last end, *i. e.*, from sin and the divine wrath, from the snares of the devil and the spirit of uncleanness, from eternal death and the neglect of God's inspirations, and adjures Him by the mystery of His Incarnation, His nativity and infancy, His divine life and labors, His agony and Passion, His Cross and dereliction, His languor, His death and

⁴² A. de Santis, S.J., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. IX, p. 288.

burial, His Resurrection and Ascension, His joys and glory, to have mercy on His children.

This Litany probably owes its origin to the two celebrated preachers of the Holy Name, SS. Bernardine of Siena and John Capistran, at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It was approved by Pius IX, in 1862, and by Leo XIII, in 1899.⁴³

d) The LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS (*Litaniae Sacratissimi Cordis Iesu*) consists of thirty-three invocations in honor of the years of our Lord's life upon earth, with special reference to His corporeal heart, which is most intimately united with His soul and His godhead. This Litany was approved by Leo XIII, in 1899.⁴⁴

e) The LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH (*Litaniae in Honorem Sancti Patriarchae Ioseph*), is modelled upon the Litany of Loreto. It consists of twenty-four titles in honor of the foster-father of Our Divine Lord, and was approved by Pius X, in 1909.⁴⁵

These Litanies, and these only, may be recited publicly and liturgically; but the bishops may sanction the printing of others for private use.⁴⁶

⁴³ F. Mersman, O.S.B., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. IX, pp. 290 sq.

⁴⁴ S. R. C., 27th June, 1898; April 2nd, 1899. Cfr. Ch. G. Kanders, *Le Cœur de Jésus*, Vol. I, Bruxelles 1926.

⁴⁵ S. R. C., March 18th, 1909.

⁴⁶ Addis and Arnold's *Cath. Dictionary*, 9th ed., revised by T. B. Scannell, London 1917, p. 526.

The discussion of the psalms and Biblical canticles (*cantica*) underlying the liturgical prayers of the Church must be left to liturgiology.⁴⁷

We will close this Section with a few words about that popular and edifying form of devotion known as Stations of the Cross.

9. THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS.—By Stations of the Cross (*Via Crucis, Via Calvarii*) is meant a series of images or pictures representing the different events in the Passion of Christ, each Station corresponding to a particular event. Each picture is surmounted by a cross, which is indeed the essential feature, the pictures not being necessary to gain the indulgences attached to this devotion. Usually the crosses or pictures are ranged round the church, the first placed on one side of the high altar, the last on the other.

The Stations of the Cross are among the most popular Catholic devotions and are to be found in almost every church. Sometimes they are erected in the open air, especially on roads which lead to a church or shrine standing on a hill.⁴⁸

The devotion of the Stations or Way of the Cross began in the Franciscan Order, but did not become general before the end of the seventeenth century. The ob-

⁴⁷ Cfr. Cardinal Wiseman, *Miscellaneous Essays*, On Prayers and Prayerbooks.—V. Thalhofer and P. Schmalzl, *Erklärung der Psalmen und der im röm. Brevier vorkommenden biblischen Cantica*, 7th ed., Ratisbon 1904.—M. Wolter, O.S.B., *Psallite Sapienter*, 3rd ed., Freiburg

1904.—N. Gihl, *Die Sequenzen des röm. Missale*, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1900.—A. Schulte, *Die Hymnen des Breviers nebst den Sequenzen des Missale*, 2nd ed., Paderborn 1906.

⁴⁸ *Catholic Dictionary* (cfr. note 46 *supra*), pp. 788 sq.

ject is to help the faithful to make in spirit, as it were, a pilgrimage to the chief scenes of Christ's Passion and death. When the devotion is performed publicly, a stanza of the "Stabat Mater" is usually sung while passing from one Station to another. The devotion is richly endowed with indulgences.⁴⁹

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⁴⁹ G. C. Alston, O.S.B., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, pp. 569 sq.

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CHAPTER VI

THE SINS OPPOSED TO PRAYER

The sins opposed to prayer, as an act of divine worship, are blasphemy and the irreverent use of the names of God and His saints.

Opposed to prayer, as an act of intercession for others, are cursing and calling down maledictions upon one's fellow creatures.

I. BLASPHEMY.—Blasphemy (from βλάπτω, I damage, and φήμη, reputation, character), is a speech or an act which contains within itself a calumny (*calumnia*) or a contumely (*contumelia*) against Almighty God,—either immediately against His Person, being, essence, or providence (*blasphemia immediata*), or mediately against revealed religion, the Church, or the saints (*blasphemia mediata*).

Blasphemy may, therefore, be briefly defined as an *imprecatory or contumelious speech against God*.¹

¹ "Contumeliosa contra Deum locutio." Cfr. Matt. IX, 2 sq.; XXVI, 60-65.—St. Augustine, *De Moribus Eccl. Cath.*, l. II, c. 11, n. 20: "Vulgo blasphemia non accipitur nisi mala verba de Deo di-

cere." (Migne, P. L., XXXII, 1354).—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 288: "Blasphemia est locutio Deo iniuriosa. Locutio autem non verbo explicito tantum, sed etiam mente et opere fieri potest."

Blasphemy is *direct* if dishonor to God is intended; *indirect*, if dishonor to God is not intended, though foreseen as a consequence.² Blasphemy is called heretical (*haeretica*) if it involves heresy; imprecative (*imprecativa*) if it involves an imprecation or threat; ordinary (*probrosa*) if it contains a mere contumely or insult.³

Blasphemy may be committed in thought (*mente vel corde*), word (*verbo*)—spoken, written, or printed,—or deed (*opere*),⁴ and is by its very nature (*ex genere suo*) a mortal sin; in fact, being a deliberate insult offered to the Lord God of Heaven and earth, it is a *crimen laesae maiestatis*, the most grievous sin a man can commit,⁵

2 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 13, art. 1, ad 2: "Sicut Deus in sanctis suis laudatur, in quantum laudantur opera, quae Deus in sanctis efficit, ita et blasphemia, quae fit in sanctos, ex consequenti in Deum redundat."—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. 1, 4th ed., p. 238.

3 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 288: "Distinguitur imprimis blasphemia: 1. Directa vel indirecta, prout a blasphematore contumelia in Deum directe intenditur vel implicite tantum in dictis aut gestis eius continetur; 2. Immediata vel mediata, prout Deum ipsum immediate afficit vel indirecte tantum, nempe sanctos inhonorando aut res sacras profanando; 3. Haereticalis, imprecativa et mere probrosa, prout haeresim vel imprecationem aut meram contumeliam continet."

4 Ps. XIII, 1: "Dixit insipiens in corde suo: Non est Deus."—

Cfr. Tertullian, *De Idolol.*, c. 23: "Loquitur in stilo, auditur in cera, manus omni sono clavior, litera omni ore vocalior." (Ed. Leopold, I, 52).

5 Lev. XXIV, 16; Matt. IX, 2 sq.; XXVI, 65; 2 Thess. II, 3 sqq.; Apoc. XIII, 1, 5 sq.; XVI, 11.—St. Jerome says (*In Is. Proph.*, l. VII, c. 18): "Nihil horribilius blasphemia, quae ponit in excelsum os suum. . . . Omne quippe peccatum comparatum blasphemiae levius est." (Migne, P. L., XXIV, 247).—St. Augustine (*Contra Mendac.*, c. 19, n. 39): "Peius est blasphemare, quam peierare, quoniam peierando falsae rei adhibetur testis Deus, blasphemando autem de ipso falsa dicuntur Deo." (P. L., XL, 545).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 13, art. 2: "Blasphemia secundum genus suum repugnat caritati divinae, quia derogat divinae bonitati, quae est obiectum caritatis, et ideo blasphemia est peccatum mor-

assuming, of course, that he acts with full advertence and consent.⁶

"There are two ways in which blasphemy may be committed unawares and without deliberation," says St. Thomas. "In the first way, by a man failing to advert to the blasphemous nature of his words, and this may happen through his being moved suddenly by passion, so as to break out into words suggested by his imagination, without paying heed to their meaning: this is a venial sin, and not blasphemy properly so called. In the second way, by adverting to the meaning of his words and to their blasphemous nature: in

tale ex suo genere."—*Ibid.*, ad 2: "*Magis in vanum assumit nomen Dei, qui aliquod falsum de Deo asserit, quam qui per nomen Dei aliquod falsum confirmat.*"—*Ibid.*, art. 3: "*Blasphemia opponitur confessioni fidei, et ideo habet in se gravitatem infidelitatis et aggravatur peccatum, si supervenit detestatio voluntatis, et adhuc magis, si prorumpit in verba, sicut et laus fidei augetur per dilectionem et confessionem. Unde quum infidelitas sit maximum peccatum secundum genus suum, consequens est, quod etiam blasphemia sit peccatum maximum ad idem genus pertinens et ipsum aggravans.*"—*Ibid.*, ad 1: "*Homicidium et blasphemia, si comparantur secundum abiecta, in quae peccatur, manifestum est, quod blasphemia, quae est directe peccatum in Deum, praeponderat homicidio, quod est peccatum in proximum. Si autem comparentur secundum effectum nocendi, sic homicidium praeponderat. plus enim homicidium no-*

cet proximo, quam blasphemia Deo. Si quia in gravitate culpa magis attenditur intentio voluntatis per-versae, quam effectus operis, ideo quum blasphemus intendat nocumentum inferre honori divino, simpliciter loquendo gravius peccat, quam homicida. Homicidium tamen primum locum tenet [in poenis] inter peccata in proximum commissa."—*Ibid.*, ad 2: "*Peius est blasphemare, quam peierare. Qui enim peierat, non dicit aut sentit aliquid falsum de Deo sicut blasphemus, sed Deum adhibet testem falsitatis, non tamquam aestimans Deum esse falsum testem, sed tamquam sperans, quod Deus super hoc non testificetur per aliquod evidens signum.*"—*Cfr. Gury, Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 289.

⁶ *Cfr. St. Augustine, Contra Mendac.*, c. 19, n. 39: "*Tanto est quisque inexcusabilior, sive periurus sive blasphemus, quanto magis ea, quae peierando vel blasphemando asserunt, falsa noverunt esse vel credunt,*" (*Migne, P. L.*, XL, 546),

which case he is not excused from mortal sin, any more than is he who, in a sudden movement of anger, kills one sitting beside him.”⁷

To utter blasphemous words by force of an inveterate habit which one is trying earnestly to break, is not a grievous sin.⁸

Blasphemy, as a rule, is an outbreak of anger against God. The temptation and an almost irresistible inclination to commit this sin often accompany, even in pious souls, certain abnormal conditions (doubts regarding the faith, internal darkness, scrupulosity), which generally originate in serious disturbances of the physical organism.⁹

It is blasphemy to say: “May the Blood of Christ destroy thee,” or “May you perish by the Sacraments,” because the Blood of Christ and the Sacraments are means of grace ordained for the salvation of men, and not for their destruction. *A fortiori* it is blasphemy to show contempt for Almighty God by expectorating in the direction of heaven or gnashing one’s teeth at the mention of that place. It is blasphemy to say: “God has forgotten me,” or to ask: “Why did God create me?”—unless such ex-

⁷ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 13, art. 2, ad 3: “*Blasphemia potest absque deliberatione ex surreptione procedere dupliciter: uno modo, quod aliquis non advertat hoc, quod dicit esse blasphemiam; quod potest contingere, quum aliquis subito ex aliqua passione in verba imaginata prorumpit, quorum significationem non considerat, et tunc est peccatum veniale et non habet proprie rationem blasphemiae; alio modo, quando advertit hoc esse blasphemiam, considerans significata verborum, et tunc non excusatur a pec-*

cato mortali, sicut nec ille, qui ex subito motu irae aliquem occidit, iuxta se sedentem.”

⁸ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 290: “*Non peccant graviter, qui irā vel aliquā passione abrepti, verba blasphemiae proferunt, non advertentes eorum significationem. Nec qui ex inveteratā consuetudine blasphemandi, quamvis serio retractatā, in eadem verba erumpunt.*”

⁹ Cfr. B. Schön, *Mitteilungen aus dem Leben Geistesgestörter*, Vienna 1859, p. 84.

pressions are used (*modo humano*) inconsiderately or as signs of pain or discouragement. It is never allowed to say that God is unjust, that He punishes goodness or rewards wickedness, etc.¹⁰

We sometimes hear it said that blasphemy is most common where faith is strongest. Father Slater thinks this may be a reason why real blasphemy is not so frequent in ordinary conversation with us as with some other nations.¹¹ Yet there is a great deal of profanity, and we can not but commend the efforts of the Holy Name Society directed against this vice.

Even the ancient pagans felt that man should never blaspheme, but always think and speak of the deity with becoming respect.¹²

2. THE IRREVERENT USE OF THE NAME OF GOD.—God's holy name is taken in vain whenever it is used as an exclamation of fear, wonder, or impatience; or merely as an interjection, *e. g.*, in such phrases as "Good God," "My Lord," "By God," "For Christ's sake," etc.

The phrase *vana usurpatio divini nominis* technically includes the irreverent use of other sacred words, such as "sacrament," "holy cross," and

¹⁰ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 290; cfr. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., pp. 517 sq.

¹¹ *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 239.

¹² Homer, *Iliad*, V, 406 sq.; XXI, 193.—Seneca, *Epist.*, 95: "*Primus est deorum cultus, deos credere, deinde reddere illis maiestatem suam, reddere bonitatem, sine qua nulla maiestas est.*"—*Quaest. Natural.*, I, VII, c. 30: "*Egregie Aristoteles*

ait, nunquam nos verecundiores esse debere, quam quum de diis agitur. Si intramus templa compositi, si ad sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, si in omne argumentum modestiae fingimur: quanto hoc magis facere debemus, quum . . . de deorum natura disputamus, ne quid temere, ne quid impudenter aut ignorantes affirmemus aut scientes mentiamur!"

the names of the Saints. To use these words as mere expletives is not, as a rule, grievously sinful. Still, the habit of pronouncing the names of holy persons or sacred objects without due reverence is reprehensible and may easily lead to mortal sin.¹³ The use of certain locutions which were originally blasphemous, but are now considered harmless, may become sinful by the intention of the user or because of scandal given; at best, the habit is incompatible with the dignity of a Christian.¹⁴

Apart from scandal (which is apt to arise especially in the case of a priest) and apart from the danger of blasphemy, the irreverence involved in taking God's holy name in vain is not grave, and therefore, as a rule, only a venial sin. This statement applies even when the name of God or the names of saints are used as exclamations of anger, provided the outburst is not directed against, and does not involve formal contempt of, God Himself or the sacred persons or things mentioned.

Göpfert, following the example of many older authors, warns preachers and confessors not to be too quick in assuming mortal sin when the name of God has been used irreverently, lest penitents acquire false notions and thereby be led to commit mortal sin. On the other hand,

¹³ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 289: "*Vana usurpatio sanctissimi nominis Dei per se non excedit veniale, quia non graviter laedit reverentiam Deo debitam. Immo saepe culpa vacat ob inadvertentiam, bonam fidem etc. Non tamen sunt excusandi, qui ex consuetudine semper nomen Dei in ore habent.*"

¹⁴ Cfr. Ex. XX, 7; Eccclus. XXIII, 10.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 290: "*Non peccat graviter, qui pronuntiat verba in se quidem blasphematoria, sed dimidiata aut corrupta, ita ut ad verum sensum non attendat. Haec enim rationem blasphemiae non amplius habent.*"

there is no denying the fact that the habitual use of sacred names always involves the danger of blasphemy.¹⁵

3. CURSING.—To curse means to invoke evil or to call down maledictions upon one's fellowmen. This act, when dictated by anger and irreverence towards God, is *per se* a grievous sin. Though thoughtlessness, inadvertence, and haste may render it merely a venial transgression, every one who has acquired the habit of cursing is in duty bound to fight it, because it easily leads to blasphemy.¹⁶ Deliberate and habitual cursing has justly been called the language of hell.

Directly opposed to the duty which every Christian has of praying for his fellowmen (*benedicere*) is the sin of uttering imprecations

¹⁵ Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., p. 515.

¹⁶ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, l. III, tr. 2, c. 1, n. 7: "*Qui talium verborum consuetudinem habet, tenetur sub peccato mortali serio conari eam tollere. Quodsi facit et tamen labitur, potest excusari aliquando, eo quod iuramenta ista impetu naturali effusa non sint voluntaria, nec in se nec in causa, utpote retractata proposito efficaci. Si non conetur, idque confessarius notet, neget ei cum discretionem absolutionem.*"—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 8: "*Interim plurimi excusantur ob inadvertentiam in subita commotione, tametsi non satis excusare videatur, quod quidam aiunt, iis verbis aliud se non intendere, quam usurpare tamquam interiectiones significativas irae suae, tum quia aequae possunt assuefacere ad verba alia*

irae et seriae voluntatis significativa, tum quia, tametsi id non possent, nihilominus non videtur licere usurpare ea, quae ex communi apprehensione aliorum sunt inhonorativae Dei."—IDEM, *ibid.*, n. 9: "*Quodsi vero quis in ira contra hominem non indignando Deo, sed homini tantum nude nominet mortem Dei, septem sacramenta, v. g. o Dei mors! vulnera etc., sine scandalo et sine iis circumstantiis, quibus contemptus importatur, non sunt blasphemiae, sed vana usurpatio nominis divini, hoc [secundo] praeecepto prohibita et peccatum inter venialia grave. Quamquam propter periculum incidendi in blasphemias, et quia raro abest scandalum ac nihilominus apud audientes Deus eiusque sacra censentur inhonorari, raro excusantur et merito absterrentur homines a similibus dictis.*"

or maledictions against them.¹⁷ When directed against creatures that bear a special relation towards God, they involve blasphemy. To utter imprecations against brute beasts or against lower creatures which stand in no special relation to God, is not blasphemy and, ordinarily, does not exceed a venial sin.¹⁸

Malediction (*maledictio*), as this sin is commonly called by moralists, may be either formal or material. It is formal (*formalis*) if inspired by the wish that the injury called down upon one's fellow creatures may really happen; it is material (*materialis*) if no such wish or intention exists.

According to the common teaching of theologians material malediction (*sine pravo affectu*)

17 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 76, art. 3: "*Maledictio est, per quam pronuntiatur malum contra aliquem vel imperando vel optando. Velle autem vel imperio movere ad malum alterius secundum se repugnat caritati, quâ diligimus proximum volentes bonum ipsius, et ita secundum suum genus est peccatum mortale, et tanto gravius, quanto personam, cui maledicimus, magis amare et revereri tenemur. Unde dicitur (Lv. xx, 9): 'Qui maledixerit patri suo et matri, morte moriatur.'* Contingit tamen, verbum maledictionis prolatum esse peccatum veniale vel propter parvitatem mali, quod quis alteri maledicendo imprecatur, vel etiam propter affectum eius, qui profert maledictionis verba, dum ex levi motu vel ex ludo aut ex surreptione aliqua talia verba profert, quia peccata verborum maxime ex affectu pensantur."—Cfr.

H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, l. III, tr. 2, c. 1, n. 10: "*In ira imprecari aliis daemonem, grandinem, fulgur etc., etsi multi confundant cum blasphemia, non tamen est blasphemia, sed dira imprecatio, quae plerumque (saltem quando dicitur in illos qui amantur ab irato) ob subitam commotionem et inadvertentiam ac defectum seriae voluntatis non est nisi venialis, quia quum se homines reflectunt, avertunt longe aliter se sentire ac sensisse, ita ut videantur interiectiones tantum quaedam esse ad significandam iram, tametsi christianos parum deceat tam absurdis interiectionibus uti. . . . Grave autem est, si subditi superioribus, filii parentibus (licet materialiter tantum) sic maledicant, praesertim in faciem, quia est contra debitam reverentiam."*

18 Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 239.

is but a venial offence, whereas formal cursing is *ex genere suo* a grievous sin, and becomes venial only when the evil wish is uttered without full deliberation or the evil is but slight.¹⁹

It goes without saying that to curse and utter maledictions is unworthy of a good Catholic and opposed to both charity and religion.²⁰

Plutarch relates that the pagan priestess Theano refused to call down maledictions upon Alcibiades because, she declared, it was her business to bless and not to curse.²¹

Profane words and vulgar expressions like "damn," "bloody," "go to hell," and so forth, are commonly used without definite purpose, and are venial sins, because they are unbecoming, shock others, or manifest anger and impatience.²²

The frequent and unnecessary use of the devil's name

¹⁹ St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, 1. V, n. 83: "*Maledictio, quâ quis optat vel imprecatur alteri malum sub ratione mali, est ex genere suo mortale. . . . Ut maledictio sit mortalis, tria requiruntur: 1. Ut malum prolatum vere optetur; 2. Ut optetur cum perfectâ deliberatione; 3. Ut malum optatum sit grave.*" (Ed. Gaudé, II, 766).

²⁰ Matt. V, 44-47; Luke IX, 52-56.—Tertullian, *De Idolol.*, c. 21: "*Scio quendam (cui Dominus ignoscat!), quum illi in publico per litteram dictum esset: Iupiter tibi sit iratus, respondisse, immo tibi. Quid aliter fecisset ethnicus, qui Iovem deum credidit? Etiam si non pereundum retorsisset maledictum, nec per ullum Iovis similem, confirmaverat Iovem deum, per quem se maledictum indigne tulisse demonstraverat remaledicens. Ad quid*

enim indigneris per eum maledictus, quem scis nihil esse? Nam si insanis, iam esse confirmas, et erit idololatria professio timoris tui: quanto magis quum per ipsum remaledicis, eodem Iovi honorem facis, quo et ille qui te provocavit! Fidelis autem in eiusmodi ridere debet, non insanire, immo secundum praeceptum, ne per Deum quidem remaledicere, sed plane benedicere per Deum, ut et idola destruas et Deum praedices et adimpleas disciplinam." (Ed. Leopold, P. I, 51).—Cfr. St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in II Cor.*, V, 4 (Migne, P. G., LXI, 433 sq.).—A. Seitz, *Die Heilsnotwendigkeit der Kirche*, pp. 208 sqq.

²¹ Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, c. 22: εὐχῶν, οὐ καταρῶν λέγειαν γέγο-νέναι.

²² Slater, *Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 239.

is not sinful, but very unbecoming, especially for priests and religious.²³

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 13, 76.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 121-123 (ed. Gaudé, I, 439).—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, Freiburg, 1881.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, 4th ed., Vol. I, pp. 237 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 7th ed., pp. 516 sqq.—J. W. Melody, art. "Blasphemy," in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, pp. 395 sq.—J. H. Fisher, art. "Cursing," *ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp. 573 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 215 sqq.

²³ Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 216.

PART II

THE DUTY OF EXTERNAL WORSHIP

CHAPTER I

SACRIFICE

I. SACRIFICE AS A RELIGIOUS ACT.—Sacrifice (*oblatio, sacrificium*) is an element of natural religion that is as old as humanity itself. It is an essential part of divine worship and, together with prayer and adoration, constitutes the most ancient and universal form of *latria*.

Broadly speaking, a sacrifice is *a religious act by which we segregate a material gift from the rest of our possessions and alter it for the purpose of relinquishing its use and returning it to God.*

Every sacrifice is inspired by the conviction that we are indebted to God for whatever we are and possess and by the intention of showing Him the homage and reverence due Him.¹

¹ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 85, art. 1: "Naturalis ratio dictat homini, quod alicui supe-

riori subdatur propter defectus, quos in se ipso sentit, in quibus ab aliquo superiori eget adiuvari et dirigi, et

Sacrifices therefore, can be offered only to God, to whom man owes his being and in whom he has his last end.²

The primary and essential object of sacrifice is the acknowledgment of God's supreme dominion over His creatures. Since the Fall there is also a secondary object, namely, to appease the divine wrath. This secondary object, though in itself purely accidental, has become inseparable from the notion of sacrifice in consequence of the sin of our first parents.³

"Man has need of sacrifice for three reasons," says St. Thomas. "First, to obtain forgiveness of his sins, which separate him from God. . . . Secondly, in order that he may persevere in the state of grace by always adhering to

quidquid illud sit, hoc est, quod apud omnes dicitur Deus. Sicut autem in rebus naturalibus naturaliter inferiora superioribus subduntur, ita etiam naturalis ratio dictat homini secundum naturalem inclinationem, ut ei, quod est supra hominem, subiectionem et honorem exhibeat secundum suum modum. Est autem modus conveniens homini, ut sensibilibus signis utatur ad aliqua exprimenda, quia ex sensibilibus cognitionem accipit. Et ideo ex naturali ratione procedit, quod homo quibusdam sensibilibus rebus utatur, offerens eas Deo in signum debitae subiectionis et honoris, secundum similitudinem eorum, qui dominis suis aliqua offerunt in recognitionem domini. Hoc autem pertinet ad rationem sacrificii. Et ideo oblatio sacrificii pertinet ad ius naturae."

² St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, I.

X, c. : "*Quae pertinent ad religionis obsequium, quo colitur Deus, sacrificium certe nullus hominum est, qui audeat dicere, debere nisi Deo.*" (Migne, P. L., XLI, 281).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 85, art. 2: "*Oblatio sacrificii fit ad aliquid significandum. Significat autem sacrificium, quod offertur exterius, interius spirituale sacrificium, quo anima seipsam offert Deo (Ps. I, 19), qui exteriores actus religionis ad interiores ordinantur. Anima autem se offert Deo in sacrificium sicut principio suae creationis et sicut fini suae beatificationis. . . . Et ideo sicut soli Deo summo debemus sacrificium spirituale offerre, ita etiam soli ei debemus offerre exteriora sacrificia.*" Cfr. 1a 2ae, qu. 102, art. 3.

³ Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, p. 287.

God. . . . Thirdly, that his soul may be perfectly united with God." ⁴

That the human race was always conscious of being in a state of grievous sin, appears from the fact that precious objects, such as the blood of beasts, and even of men, were offered as sacrifices to God at a very early date. Human sacrifices were no doubt a terrible aberration, but they clearly indicate that even before Christ appeared on earth, man felt that he could atone for his guilt only by sacrificing himself or his fellowmen. ⁵

The acknowledgment of God's supreme dominion over His creatures culminates in adoration; the effort to appease His wrath centres in contrite expiation, for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness of sin. Hence the distinction between *sacrifices of praise* and *sacrifices of propitiation*. And since man is indebted for many benefits to God, sacrifices have the additional purpose of *thanksgiving* and *petition*.

The imperfect sacrifices of the Old Testament were merely types foreshadowing the one perfect sacrifice of the New Dispensation, which was offered by Jesus Christ upon the Cross. "Being in themselves imperfect and inefficacious," says Pohle, "the sacrifices of the Levites could effect 'a legal cleansing of the flesh,' but no remis-

⁴ *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 22, art. 2: "Indiget homo sacrificio propter tria: uno quidem modo ad remissionem peccati, per quod a Deo avertitur. . . . Secundo, ut homo in statu gratiae conservetur semper Deo inhaerens. . . . Tertio ad hoc, quod spiritus hominis perfecto Deo uniatur."

⁵ A. Stöckl, *Das Opfer nach seinem Wesen und seiner Geschichte*, Mayence 1861; A. H. H. Kamphausen, *Das Verhältniß des Menschenopfers zur israelitischen Religion*, Leipsic 1896; E. Mader, *Die Menschenopfer der alten Hebräer*, Freiburg 1909.

sion of sins. Their very insufficiency made them prophetic types of the perfect sacrifice of the New Law. If sins were forgiven in the Old Testament, it was not by the blood of goats or calves, but by the blood of the promised Redeemer. Hence the variety of the Levitic sacrifices and their incessant repetition. They were mere types, expressing the constant need of propitiation through the bloody sacrifice of the Cross.”⁶

Hence sacrifice may be adequately defined as *the external offering of a sensible gift, which is destroyed, or at least submitted to an appropriate transformation, by an authorized minister, in recognition of God's supreme dominion and in order to appease His anger.*⁷

There is but one such sacrifice under the New Dispensation, namely, the perfect sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ. “By one oblation he hath per-

⁶ Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, pp. 291 sq.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 286.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 85, art. 3, ad 2: “Triplex est hominis bonum. Primum quidem est bonum animae, quod Deo offertur inferiori quodam sacrificio per devotionem et orationem et alios huiusmodi interiores actus, et hoc est principale sacrificium. Secundum est bonum corporis, quod Deo quodammodo offertur per martyrrium et abstinenciam seu continentiam. Tertium est bonum exteriorum rerum, de quo sacrificium offertur Deo, directe quidem, quando immediate res nostras Deo offerimus, mediate autem, quando eas communicamus proximis propter Deum.”—*Ibid.*, ad 3: “Sacrificia

proprie dicuntur, quando circa res Deo oblatas aliquid fit, sicut animalia occidebantur et comburebantur, quod panis frangitur et comeditur et benedicitur. Et hoc ipsum nomen sonat, nam sacrificium dicitur ex hoc, quod homo facit aliquid sacrum. Oblatio autem directe dicitur, quum Deo aliquid offertur, etiamsi nihil circa ipsum fiat, sicut dicuntur offerri denarii vel panes in altari, circa quos nihil fit. Unde omne sacrificium est oblatio, sed non convertitur.”—Cfr. qu. 86, art. 1; 1a 2ae, qu. 102, art. 3; 3a, qu. 22, art. 2; qu. 48, art. 3, where St. Thomas says: “Sacrificium proprie dicitur aliquid factum in honorem proprie Deo debitum ad eum placandum.”

fected for ever them that are sanctified." ⁸

"Christ," says St. Thomas, "in His human capacity, as man, was not only a priest, but also a perfect gift or victim, *i. e.*, a sacrificial gift for sin, a peace offering, and a burnt offering." ⁹

His whole life was a continuous sacrifice of humiliation and self-abasement (*exinanitio*),¹⁰ which reached its climax when He died on the Cross.¹¹ It is by this supreme act that He redeemed the human race from sin.

This sacrifice is continued in the *Mass*, which is intrinsically and essentially a representation and commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross,¹² the pivot and centre of Catholic worship, and the only liturgical act in which every member of the Church is in duty bound to participate at regular intervals.

Sacred Scripture censures the heathen, not because they offered sacrifices, but because they sacrificed to idols

⁸ Heb. X, 14.—St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, l. XVII, c. 20, n. 2: "Pro illis omnibus sacrificiis et oblationibus [*Veteris Testamenti*] corpus eius [*Christi*] offertur et participantibus ministratur." (Migne, P. L., XLI, 556).

⁹ *Summa Theol.*, 3a, qu. 22, art. 2: "Ipse Christus, inquantum homo, non solum fuit sacerdos, sed etiam hostia perfecta simul existens hostia pro peccato et hostia pacifica et holocaustum."

¹⁰ Cfr. Pohle-Preuss, *Christology*, pp. 95 sqq.

¹¹ Phil. II, 8; Col. II, 14; Heb. X, 5-10.

¹² Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, pp. 332 sqq.—*Conc. Lateran.* IV, c. 1: "In qua [ecclesia] idem ipse sacerdos est sacrificium, Iesus Christus, cuius corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter continentur." (Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion*, n. 430).—*Conc. Trident.*, Sess. 22, c. 1, can. 1-4.—N. Gihl, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, 4th ed., St. Louis 1914.—J. Grimault, *La Doctrine de la Sainte Messe*, Paris 1905.—For additional literature on the Mass see Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, pp. 273 sq.

instead of to the one true God, and says their sacrifices were rejected because they were inspired by a wrong intention and therefore could not be pleasing to God. To perform acts of external worship without due regard to the moral law of nature, is not to honor God, but to dishonor Him.¹³

2. THE MORAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SACRIFICE.—Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for men, and spiritual self-immolation is the essence and climax of every Christian's life. External gifts, even though they consist of the very life-blood of the giver, are worthless if unaccompanied by interior contrition and penitence. To participate in the benefits of the Redemption, the individual must add to the objective sacrifice offered once for all by Jesus Christ on the Cross, a subjective and interior sacrifice, by entering into and adopting as his own the intention and purpose for which our Lord laid down His life.¹⁴

This interior union with the sacrificial intention of Christ may manifest itself in various external acts, which are called sacrifices in a figurative sense, but partake of the true sacrificial character only in so far as they are consciously referred to the Sacrifice of the Cross.

In this sense, sacrifice consists in humbly sub-

¹³ 1 Kings XV, 22; Ps. XXXIX, 7; L, 18; Os. VI, 6; Am. V, 21-27; Mich. VI, 6 sqq.; Is. I, 10-17; Matt. IX, 13; 1 Cor. X, 19 sq.; Heb. X, 5.—M. Wiener, *Die Anschauun-*

gen der Propheten von der Sittlichkeit, Berlin 1909.

¹⁴ Gen. IV, 4; 1 Cor. XI, 26; XIII, 1-8.

mitting to the will of God and patiently accepting the sufferings and tribulations of everyday life, which are not inappropriately called the "daily cross" of the Christian believer.

If one has this disposition, it is not sinful for him to wish conditionally that a certain thing may or may not happen in some particular case,¹⁵ and the expressions of pain or impatience that sometimes escape the lips of even pious persons, when sorely tried, are signs of weakness rather than sins. Resignation to God's will is a duty, and to refuse it deliberately, or wilfully to entertain feelings of positive repugnance, is a mortal sin.

The sacrificial intention which every Christian must harbor in his soul manifests itself, secondly, in voluntary works of self-denial and humiliation, submission to the will of God, abstention from licit pleasures, in various works of mercy, and, generally, in doing good. These are all sacrifices acceptable to God, provided they come from a pure, or at least from a contrite heart, and are inspired by charity for one's fellowmen.

One of the noblest sacrifices a man can offer to God is a meek and grateful disposition even in adversity. The verbal manifestation of this disposition has fittingly been called the language of the Saints and it ought to be in the mouth of every Christian without exception.¹⁶

The oft-repeated dictum: It is the Mass that matters! was coined by Augustine Birrell, a Baptist. "The Mass,"

¹⁵ Matt. XVI, 24; XXVI, 38 sq.; Luke XIV, 27; Heb. XII, 1 sq.

¹⁶ Tob. II, 10, 14; Matt. V, 23 sqq.; Eph. IV, 2; V, 20; Col. III, 15, 17; 1 Thess. V, 18.—St. Jerome, *Comment. in Epist. ad Ephes.*, I. III, c. 5.

he says, "is a mystery so tremendous, so profoundly attractive, so intimately associated with the keystone of the Christian faith, so vouched for by the testimony of Saints . . . If the Incarnation be indeed the one divine event to which the whole creation moves, the miracle of the altar may well seem its restful shadow cast over a dry and thirsty land, for the help of man who is apt to be discouraged if perpetually told that everything really important and interesting happened once for all, long ago, in a chill, historic past. *It is the Mass that matters.* It is the Mass that makes the difference, so hard to define—so subtle is it, yet so perceptible—between a Catholic country and a Protestant one, between Dublin and Edinburgh, between Havre and Cromer." ¹⁷

On the duty of attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, on Sundays and holydays of obligation, see *infra*, pp. 336 sqq.

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 85-87.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, Freiburg 1904, pp. 325 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, Freiburg 1881, pp. 478 sqq.—Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, pp. 277 sqq.

¹⁷ *Nineteenth Century*, Apr., 1896; *Customs and Symbols*, N. Y. 1925, quoted by H. T. Henry, *Catholic* pp. 133 sq.

CHAPTER II

VOWS

SECTION I

DEFINITION OF A VOW

I. A vow (ᾠχή, *votum*) is a free and deliberate promise made to God to do something that is good and possible, and better than its omission.¹

A vow is essentially an act of divine worship (*cultus latriae*) because it is, so to speak, a contract which a man makes with God and by which he deliberately assumes a new obligation that binds him in conscience.²

As a rule the taking of a vow is accompanied by prayers and sacrifices offered for the purpose of obtaining some particular grace. Pious persons wishing to be relieved from evil, or to secure the divine assistance in circumstances of particular difficulty or danger, have long been wont to

1 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 1: "Promissio procedit ex proposito faciendi. Propositum autem aliquam deliberationem praeexigit, quum sit actus voluntatis deliberatae. Sic ergo ad votum tria ex necessitate requiruntur, primo quidem deliberatio, secundo propositum voluntatis, tertio promissio, in

qua perficitur ratio voti."—Cfr. *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 1307, § 1.

2 St. Thomas, *ibid.*, art. 5: "Votum est ordinatio quaedam eorum, quae quis vovet in divinum cultum seu obsequium. Et sic patet, quod vovere proprie est actus latriae seu religionis."

add to their prayers the promise of some sacrifice, *e. g.*, to perform a work of charity or self-denial, in order to make the appeal to God's mercy stronger and more efficacious. The vows of which we read in the Old Testament were all hypothetical, *i. e.*, subject to the fulfilment of some condition.³

Being a formal promise, a vow differs from the mere purpose of doing or omitting something, because a purpose does not *per se* oblige in conscience, whereas a vow does.⁴

The mere intention of making a vow is not sufficient to constitute a vow, and involves no obligation. The essential constituent of a vow is an obligation assumed in conscience. This is a matter in regard to which the faithful ought to be instructed in confession, lest they erroneously believe that the mere resolve of making a vow or performing some virtuous act entails the same obligations as the vow itself. To fail to keep a good resolution may be a sin, if the failure results from carelessness, sloth, or sensuality; but it is a sin (usually venial) only *per accidens*, because the sinful character of the omission lies in the cause, not in the act itself.⁵

³ Gen. XXVIII, 20-22; Numb. XXI, 2; Judg. XI, 30 sq.; 1 Kings I, 10 sq.; 2 Kings XV, 7 sq.—Cfr. A. Aust, *die Religion der Römer*, pp. 29 sq., 126.

⁴ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacram.*, I, II, p. 12, c. 3 says: "*Votum est testificatio quaedam promissionis spontaneae, quae ad solum Deum et ad ea, quae Dei sunt magis proprie, refertur. Vovere siquidem est, testificatione promissionis spontaneae*

Deo se obligare ac debitorem statuere. Nam qui promittit, simpliciter spondet se facturum aliquid; qui vero vovet, contestatur promissioni suae et affirmat ipsam promissionem. Ubi inquantum est promissio, tenetur, inquantum est contestatio, obligatur." (Migne, P. L., CLXXVI, 521).

⁵ Cfr. F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., p. 464.

2. To deny the religious and moral character of vows is to doubt or deny the value of prayer and the significance of sacrifice. To promise God to do something one is not obliged to do, is manifestly a religious act, which derives its moral quality from the fact that it may be made a powerful means of acquiring virtue. By a vow the will, which is so easily moved, is directed toward goodness, *i. e.*, toward God, and thus a fruitful source of heroic virtue is opened.⁶

It is true that a vow binds the will, but this very fact constitutes it a positive instrument for the acquisition of true Christian liberty, which is the result of self-control, and thus makes a vow a powerful aid to human frailty.

Christ never made a vow because he was God and confirmed in goodness.⁷ But for men vows are expressly approved alike in the Old and in the New Testament.⁸ We read in the Acts

⁶ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 6: "*Triplici ratione facere idem opus cum voto est melius et magis meritorium, quam facere sine voto. Primo quidem, quia vovere est actus patriae, quae est praecipua inter virtutes morales. Nobilioris autem virtutis est opus melius et magis meritorium. . . . Secundo, quia ille, qui vovet aliquid et facit, plus se Deo subicit, quam ille, qui solum facit. Subicit enim se Deo non solum quantum ad actum, sed etiam quantum ad potestatem, quia de cetero non potest aliud facere; sicut plus daret homini, qui daret ei arborem cum fructibus, quam qui daret ei fructus tantum,*

Et inde est, quod etiam promittentibus gratiae dicuntur. Tertio, quia per votum immobiliter voluntas firmatur in bonum. Facere autem aliquid ex voluntate firmatâ in bonum, pertinet ad perfectionem virtutis."—*Ibid.*, qu. 189, art. 2.

⁷ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 4, ad 3: "*Christo secundum se non competeat vovere, tum quia Deus erat, tum etiam quia, inquantum homo, habebat firmatam voluntatem in bono quasi comprehensor existens.*"

⁸ Gen. XXVIII, 20; Lev. XXVII, 2 sqq.; Ps. XLIX, 14 sq.; LX, 9; LXXXV, 12.

of the Apostles that St. Paul and other early Christians shore their heads in pursuance of a vow.⁹ St. Ambrose,¹⁰ St. Augustine,¹¹ and others of the Fathers warmly recommended the practice of making vows.¹²

That abuses have arisen in connection with vows proves nothing against their legitimacy.¹³

The Church by esteeming and recommending vows imposes no yoke on any one. The vowing individual imposes a yoke upon himself, and this act of self-denial, if prudently and deliberately performed, is truly moral. The Church by her legislation on vows and the binding force thereof does not impair liberty; on the contrary, her laws are liberty's best guarantee, for, in the first place, they prevent the faithful from binding themselves thoughtlessly and without a divine call; and, secondly, they interpret the obligations incurred by vows

⁹ Acts XVIII, 18; XXI, 23 sqq.—Cfr. J. E. Belser, *Die Selbstverteidigung des hl. Paulus*, pp. 141 sqq.; and the same author's *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 89 sqq.

¹⁰ *De Offic.*, l. III, c. 12, n. 76–81 (Migne, P. L., XVI, 137 sqq.).

¹¹ *Enarr. in Ps.*, 75, n. 16: "*Quisque quod potest, voveat et reddat. Ne voveatis et non reddatis, sed quisque, quod potest, voveat et reddat. Non sitis pigri ad vovendum. Non enim viribus vestris implebitis.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXVI, 967).—*Idem*, *ibid.*, 131, n. 3: "*Nemo praesumat viribus suis se reddere, quod voverit; qui te hortatur, ut voveas, ipse adiuvat, ut reddas.*" (P. L., XXXVII, 1717).

¹² J. B. Wirthmüller, *Über das*

Sittengesetz, pp. 52 sqq.; Kirchberg, *De Voti Natura*, pp. 167 sqq., 195 sqq.

¹³ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 189, art. 2, ad 3: "*Vovere religionis ingressum est quaedam confirmatio voluntatis ad meliora, et ideo, quantum est de se, non dat homini occasionem ruinae, sed magis subtrahit. Sed si aliquis voti transgressor gravius ruat, hoc non derogat bonitati voti, sicut nec derogat bonitati baptismi, quod aliqui post baptismum gravius peccant.*"—Cfr. H. Denifle, O. P., *Luther und Luthertum*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 61 sqq. (English ed. by Volz, I, 73 sqq.); A. Schulze, *Das Gelübde in der neueren theologischen Ethik*, Gütersloh 1906.

leniently and dispense from them when fulfilment would prove harmful. This is a great advantage, especially when we consider that, had not the Church the power to interpret vows, individual Christians would often be sorely troubled in conscience when they wished to withdraw from such an obligation merely on the strength of their own private judgment.¹⁴

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88.—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 38.—IDEM, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, c. 138.—F. Suarez, *De Religione*, tr. VI, l. 1-6.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 194-262 (ed. Gaudé, I, 495).—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 538 sqq.—C. Kirchberg, *De Voti Natura, Obligatione, Honestate*, Münster i. W., 1897, pp. 5 sqq.—Marsot, *Traité Pratique des Voeux*, 9th ed., Paris 1919.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Moralis*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 273 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, 27th ed., pp. 229 sqq.—H. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 222 sqq.—Th. Bouquillon, *De Virtute Religionis*, Part II, Bruges 1880, n. 302-502.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., pp. 170 sqq.—J. d'Annibale, *Summula Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, 5th ed., pp. 178 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 321 sqq.

¹⁴ F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 331.

SECTION 2

DIVISION OF VOWS

Vows may be divided according to substance, form, or effect.

1. With regard to *substance* vows are (a) personal, real, or mixed; (b) perpetual or temporary.

a) A *personal vow* is a promise of some act to be performed, *e. g.*, fasting, nursing the sick, going on a pilgrimage.

A *real vow* is one by which a thing (*e. g.*, a sum of money) is dedicated to God.

A *mixed vow* combines the qualities of both personal and real vows. Such a mixed vow would be a promise to fast for the purpose of being able to give alms to the poor.¹

b) In respect of time, vows are secondly divided into *perpetual* and *temporary*. They are called perpetual if the obligation is assumed for life; temporary, if it is assumed for a limited time only.

2. With regard to *form*, vows are (a) absolute or conditional; (b) explicit or implicit.

a) An absolute vow (*votum absolutum*) is one

¹ *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 1308, § 4.

that has no condition attached to it; a conditional vow is one that has.

In conditional vows the fulfilment of the promise is made to depend upon some definite event, *e. g.*, a prayer being heard. Consequently there is no obligation to keep the vow until that event has happened. To this class belongs the so-called penal vow (*votum poenale*), which is a promise made to God to perform a definite penance if one should have the misfortune to commit, or fall back into, a certain sin.

b) An explicit vow (*votum explicitum*) is one in which the promise is clearly expressed. An implicit vow (*votum implicitum*) implies an act necessarily connected with the act expressly promised, as, for instance, according to a theological opinion, the vow of chastity is implied in major orders.

3. With regard to their *canonical effects*, vows are divided into solemn and simple (*vota solemnia et simplicia*). The basis of this distinction is not the greater or less measure of solemnity wherewith the vow is taken, but solely the positive law of the Church.²

The classification of vows into temporary and perpetual, simple and solemn, in reference to religious profession, is comparatively new. In the middle of the sixteenth century the only acknowledged form of profession was the solemn vow, which was supposed to be taken after the novitiate. With the exception of the Society of Jesus, this

² *Codex Iuris Can.*, can. 1308; cfr. Wernz, *Ius Decretalium*, III, 572.

practice was followed by all religious orders until 1858, when the *S. Congregatio super Statu Regularium* enacted³ that, after the novitiate, the members of male religious institutes should take simple vows, which were to be continued for three years from the date of simple profession, or longer, according to the prudent judgment of the superiors, but not beyond twenty-five years. Leo XIII⁴ extended this decree to nuns with solemn vows. Yet up to a few years ago it was always the opinion of canonists and the practice of the Roman Congregations to consider these simple vows as perpetual. Lately the Roman Court commenced to regard them as temporary (triennial), and this view has been embodied in the new Code.⁵

Solemn vows are those recognized by the Church as such. They are perpetual and are made only in religious orders properly so called. They include the three essential elements of the religious life,—poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Temporary profession does not involve such an absolute and lasting contract as perpetual profession. In regard to the latter the difference between simple and solemn vows is most important. Simple perpetual profession implies no absolute and irrevocable covenant, whereas solemn per-

³ Decree "*Neminem latet.*"

⁴ "*Perpensis*," May 3, 1902.

⁵ Cfr. P. Augustine, O.S.B., *Com-*

mentary on the New Code of Canon Law, Vol. III, p. 254, St. Louis 1919.

petual profession, by its very nature, spells irrevocable consecration to God and acceptance of the act by a religious superior in the name of the Church.⁶

The distinction between reserved and non-reserved vows belongs to Canon Law rather than to Moral Theology. Of private vows, the only ones reserved to the Holy See under the New Code are that of perfect and perpetual chastity and that of entering a religious institute with solemn vows, provided the vow has been taken unconditionally after the eighteenth year of age completed.⁷

A public vow is defined by the Code as one accepted by a legitimate religious superior in the name of the Church. All vows not thus accepted are private.⁸ A solemn vow is always public, but not *vice versa*.

READINGS.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., p. 273.—IDEM, *Las Religiosas*, com. IV, n. 1 sq.—P. Chas. Augustine, O.S.B., *Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law*, Vol. VI, St. Louis 1920.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 224 sqq.

⁶ *Op. cit.*, III, 259.

⁷ *C. I. C.*, can. 1309.

⁸ *C. I. C.*, can. 1308, § 1.

SECTION 3

OBJECT OF VOWS

By the object of a vow we understand its matter, or, in other words, that which is promised to God.

This object must be good, nay something better than its opposite.¹ It may be something that is not a matter of duty, but merely of counsel, or something which is a duty, as, *e. g.*, patience in suffering or chastity corresponding to one's state of life.² Vows of the last-mentioned kind are often made with the intention of insuring special fervor in the fulfilment of one's duties. To the original obligation arising from the law a vow adds the additional one resulting from the promise made. The so-called baptismal vow, or a promise made in the confessional to avoid the occasion of sin, to keep the holydays of obligation, etc., are in themselves mere resolutions, but partake of the nature of vows if they are accompanied by a solemn promise to employ extraordinary means of grace.

Nothing that is sinful, unjust, incompatible

¹ Ths. Slater, S.J., *Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 247.

² St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 189, art. 2: "*Unum et*

idem opus ex voto factum est laudabilius, quam si sine voto fiat."—Cfr. qu. 88, art. 6.

with one's higher duties, or physically or morally impossible, can be made the object of a vow.

The matter of a vow, by its very nature, must be something which is physically and morally possible, for no one can reasonably assume an obligation which it is beyond his power to fulfil.³

If a vow can be kept only in part, and the matter is capable of being divided (*materia divisibilis*), the *vovens* is bound to do as much as he can, unless he has promised different acts as parts of one inseparable whole. Thus if a husband or wife had vowed to observe chastity, he or she would at least have to refrain from *demanding* the *debitum*. If one had made a vow to give a certain sum to the poor, and found that he was unable to give all he had promised, he would have to give as much as he could.

A similar rule governs all circumstances which may enter into the substance of a vow. Thus, if one has vowed to make a pilgrimage on foot, and finds himself unable to walk, he must go on horseback, or by train, or in some other way, if he can.⁴

³ Cfr. Matt. XV, 5 sq.; Mark VII, 11-13.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 315: "I. Materia voti debet esse moraliter bona, immo de bono meliori, quia Deus non colitur actione indifferenti aut minus bonâ; nam per votum promittitur Deus specialis cultus, qui haberi nequit, nisi in promissione rei melioris. Bonum autem melius non solum absolute in se, sed etiam relative ad varias circumstantias intellegitur.

II. *Materia voti debet esse res moraliter possibilis, quia votum est promissio facta Deo cum intentione se obligandi; nemo autem se obligare potest ad aliquid sibi moraliter impossibile. Si vero res sit divisibilis et ex parte possibilis sit, pro hac parte valet votum; non valet autem, si sit moraliter indivisibilis.*"

⁴ F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., p. 471.

A vow to avoid all, even the slightest venial sins, would be invalid because the matter promised is impossible. The case would be different if the vow referred to mortal sins, or to *deliberate* venial sins, or to venial sins of a determined species. Such vows are valid, though on account of the difficulty involved in keeping them, they are not expedient for all.⁵

A vow to marry or get married would be, *per se*, invalid, even if it referred to some poor and pious person. The reason is that, for the *vovens*, the celibate state would be *bonum maius*. If, however, marriage is necessary for any individual, either to remove scandal or to escape the danger of incontinence, it would be for that person a *bonum melius* and hence a fit object for a vow. The same is true if one who had already made up his mind to enter the matrimonial state, would vow to marry a poor girl in order to rescue her from poverty.⁶

To vow absolutely never to make a vow would be invalid, because it is better to vow than not to vow. To vow never to make a vow except with the permission of one's confessor, on the other hand, would be valid, because it is better to make a vow without danger of imprudence than with that danger present. If one who has vowed never to make a vow except with the consent of his confessor would afterwards break his promise by making a vow without consulting his confessor, the act would be sinful indeed, but the vow would be valid, unless the *vovens* had expressly stipulated that any future vow thus taken should be invalid.⁷

⁵ Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, p. 277; cfr. Mazzella, *De Gratia*, disp. 2, art. 5.

⁶ Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 231.

⁷ *Ibid.*; cfr. P. Laymann, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, l. IV, tr. 4, c. 2, n. 5.

READINGS.—Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 315-318.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 549 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., Paderborn 1909, pp. 471 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 276 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 229 sqq.

SECTION 4

CONDITIONS OF VALIDITY

The conditions required to make a vow valid and licit, are the following:

1. He who makes a vow must have the serious and deliberate intention (*animus vovendi*) of binding himself by his promise under pain of sin, because every vow is a kind of particular law which the *vovens* takes upon himself before God.¹

2. He must have sufficient knowledge and be free to make or not to make the promise in question. Hence the following classes of persons are incapable of making a valid vow:

- a) Minors;
- b) Those entirely or partly intoxicated;
- c) Those who have not the full use of reason;
- d) Those who act under the influence of substantial error concerning the nature or purpose of the vow;
- e) Those impelled by grave fear caused unjustly and with reference to the vow;²

¹ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 310: "*Ad voti validitatem requiritur vera et deliberata intentio votum emittendi, seu promissio vera Deo sub peccati poenâ facta, quia votum est lex quaedam particularis, quam vovens sibi coram Deo im-*

ponit. Sufficit autem voluntas et deliberatio, quae ad peccatum mortale requiruntur."

² *Op. cit.*, I, 323: *Quaeritur, an valeat votum metu factum? Resp.*

1. *Negative, si metus sit gravis, iniustus et incussus in ordine ad vo-*

f) Those under special obedience, as children, religious, scrupulous persons, in matters falling within the sphere of parental power, religious obedience, or special direction, unless they act with the knowledge and consent of their parents or superiors.

A vow made without the serious and deliberate intention of binding oneself (*sine animo vovendi*) is called *votum fictum*. It is, *per se*, a venial sin, unless it involves contempt of God, grave scandal, or serious deception, in which case it is a mortal sin.

A vow is invalid if made in complete or partial *ignorance* of the obligation which it involves; but it is valid if the subject has at least a *cognitio plena habitualis*, even though actual advertence be lacking, or *implicita*, as, for instance, when one vows to do this or that according to common usage or custom.

A *substantial error* affects either the substance of the matter vowed, or some inherent circumstance of such importance that if the *vovens* knew of it, he would not make the vow.

The purpose of a vow is the *causa motiva* or *finalis* that inspires it. Note that a religious vow always binds unless the error affects the substance, because of the *firmitas status religiosi*; the religious state being precisely that which one intends to vow primarily and absolutely.³

tum. Ratio est, quia Deus non censetur acceptare talem promissionem, quam homo probus non acceptaret. . . . 2. Affirmative, si metus oriatur ab intrinseco vel a causa necessaria, nisi voventi usum rationis adimat, quia tunc votum illud est simpliciter voluntarium. Item, si metus pro-

veniat ex causa levi, quia metus ille non censetur efficaciter in actum influere, et est potius occasio, quam causa voti."—Cfr. Aug. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Casus Conscientiae*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., n. 252-256.

³ St. Alphonsus explains this seeming inconsistency by saying that if

Grave fear is fear that disturbs reason. To make a vow invalid such fear must be unjustly caused and constitute the motive of the vow. It is plain that a vow taken in this state of mind lacks the essential element of freedom.

A *vow of chastity* made about the age of puberty is ordinarily valid. So are all vows made in order to obtain the divine help in *danger of death*, no matter whether this danger arises from sickness, accident, or some other cause.

3. The object of the vow, as we have already seen in a previous section, must be something good and lawful, and subject to the power of the *vovens*.

A vow, the object of which were physically or morally impossible, would be invalid, as would also a vow by which one tried to obligate another without his consent. Thus a child that has been dedicated to the religious state by a vow of his parents, is not bound to embrace that state unless he has made the parental promise his own. A vow made by a husband without the consent of his wife or by a wife without the consent of her husband (*absque pari consensu*), in regard to matters over which neither party has exclusive control (*e. g.*, common property or the *debitum*), does not bind the other party, and binds the party

the Church did not insist on the validity of such vows, the common weal would be injured by many scandals, etc. The vow to enter the religious state, moreover, as Göpfert

points out, involves a sort of bilateral contract, analogous to matrimony, and consequently involves a similar obligation.

making it only in so far as its fulfilment is not hindered by the other party.⁴ For the same reason, *i. e.*, because a vow binds only him who has made it validly, the heirs of a testator are bound to fulfil a vow made by him, not by reason of the

⁴ Cfr. Numb. XXX, 3-17; 1 Cor. VII, 4-5.—Tertullian, *Ad Uxorem*, l. I, c. 6: "Quot sunt, qui statim a lavacro carnem suam obsignant! Quot item, qui consensu pari inter se matrimonii debitum tollunt voluntarii spadones pro cupiditate regni caelestis." (Ed. Leopold, P. II, 67).—St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 148 (al. 14), n. 28: "Reperi te [Celantia matrona] miro fidei amore succensam aliquot iam ante annos continentiam proposuisse et reliquum vitae tuae tempus pudicitiae consecrasse. Magni hoc animi signum et perfectae virtutis indicium est, renuntiare subito expertae voluptati, fugere notas carnis illecebras et calentis adhuc aetatis flammam fidei amore [al. ardore] restinguere. Sed illud quoque simul didici, quod me non mediocriter angit ac stimulat, te videlicet tantum hoc bonum absque consensu et pacto viri servare coepisse, quum hoc Apostolica omnino interdicit auctoritas, quae in hac dumtaxat causa non modo uxorem viro, sed etiam virum uxoris subiecit potestati (1 Cor. vii, 4). Tu vero quasi oblita foederis nuptias pactique huius ac iuris immemor inconsulto viro vivisti Domino castitatem. Sed periculose promittitur, quod adhuc in alterius potestate est. Et nescio, quam sit grata donatio, si unus offert rem duorum. Multa iam per huiuscemodi ignorantiam et audivimus et vidimus scissa coniugia, quodque recordari piget, occasione castitatis adulterium perpetratum.

Nam dum una pars se etiam a licitis abstinere, altera ad illicita delapsa est. Et nescio in tali causa, quis magis accusari, quis amplius culpari debeat, utrum ille, qui repulsus a coniuge fornicatur, an illa, quae repellendo a se virum, eum fornicationi quodammodo obicit. Atque ut super hac causa, quid veritas habeat, agnoscas, pauca mihi de divina auctoritate ponenda sunt. Apostolicae doctrinae regula nec cum Ioviniano aequat continentiae opera nuptiarum, nec cum Manichaeo coniugia condemnat. Ita vas electionis ac magister gentium inter utrumque temperatus incedit ac medius, ut remedium incontinentiae indulgeat et ad praemium provocet continentiam. Totusque in hac causa eius hic sensus est, ut ex utriusque sententia proponatur castitas aut certe ab utroque debitum commune solvatur." (Migne, P. L., XXII, 1217).—IDEM, *Epist.*, 123 (al. 11), n. 11 (P. L., XXII, 1053).—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 262 (al. 199), n. 2: "Omitto, quod ipsam continentiam illo nondum volente non secundum sanam doctrinam se suscepisse cognovi."—*Ibid.*, n. 3: "Quod Deo pari consensu ambo voveratis, perseveranter usque in finem reddere ambo debuistis: a quo proposito si lapsus est ille, tu saltem constantissime persevera. Quod te non exhortarer, nisi quia tibi ad hoc ipse consenserat." (P. L., XXXIII, 1078).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 3a, Suppl., qu. 64, art. 6,

vow itself (*ratione voti*), but as a matter of justice, inasmuch as, by accepting the inheritance, they have assumed the moral and legal obligations connected therewith.

READINGS.—J. P. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 310–314.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 558 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., pp. 467 sqq.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, 247 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S. J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I. 9th ed., pp. 274 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 226 sqq.—A. M. Arregui, S. J., *Summarium Theol. Mor.*, ed. 4a, Bilbao 1920, pp. 114 sq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 172 sqq.

SECTION 5

THE OBLIGATION OF VOWS

1. Every valid vow entails the obligation of keeping the promise made to the best of one's ability.¹

"It pertains to the fidelity of a man," says St. Thomas, "that he keep that which he has promised. . . . Above all man owes fidelity to God, both because of His overlordship and on account of benefits conferred, and consequently man is in a very special manner obliged to keep the vows he makes to God."²

"A vow obliges *per se*," says Gury, "like a law or a commandment of the Church; that is to say, gravely in an important matter, and lightly in unimportant ones. For a vow is, as it were, a private law, which a man imposes upon himself."³

¹ Numb. XXX, 3 sqq.; Deut. XXIII, 21-23; Eccles. V, 3 sq.

² *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 3: "*Ad fidelitatem hominis pertinet, ut solvat id, quod promisit. . . . Maxime autem debet homo Deo fidelitatem, tum ratione dominii, tum etiam ratione beneficii suscepti, et ideo maxime obligatur homo ad hoc, quod impleat vota Deo facta, hoc*

enim pertinet ad fidelitatem, quam homo debet Deo."

³ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 319: "*Votum obligat per se sicut lex vel praeceptum Ecclesiae, ac proinde graviter in materia gravi, et leviter in levi; votum enim est quasi quaedam lex privata, quam quis sibi imponit.*"

Failure to keep a vow involves faithlessness towards God and a violation of the reverence and respect due to Him by His creatures. It is a sin against the virtue of religion, and consequently a mortal sin, unless the matter involved is of no importance (*parvitas materiae*).⁴

In gauging the obligation involved in a vow, the first and most important thing to be considered is the *intention*.

"Ordinarily," says Fr. Slater, "it will be presumed that in a grave matter, such as the Church considers to be sufficient for a precept to bind under mortal sin, a vow also binds under pain of grave sin, for the intention of him who took the vow is presumed to accommodate itself to the matter. Nothing, however, prevents him from limiting the obligation of a vow even in a grave matter, so that transgressions of it will be only venial sins, if he expressly intends it."⁵

⁴ For judging *parvitas materiae* in regard to vows, Noldin gives the following rule: "*Ad diiudicandum materiae parvitatem in votis, quorum materia per modum unius promittitur, materia omissa non absolute, sed relative ad totam rem promissam considerari debet, adeo ut solum tertia vel quarta totius pars censi debeat res notabilis, quae sine gravi culpa omitti nequeat. Sic qui per integrum mensem maii devotioni maiali assistere promisit, non adeo graviter peccat, quod una alterave vice devotionem omittit, quamvis singulae devotiones absolute consideratae (si per semihoram durant)*

gravem materiam constituent, sed eo quod octo vel decem assistentias omittit." (*Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 233).

⁵ *A Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 249.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 3, ad 3: "*Obligatio voti ex propria voluntate et intentione causatur.*"—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 319: "*Votum obligat secundum voventis intentionem, si ille obligationis quantitatem in actu vovendi determinet, ita ut sub levi tantum in materia quantumvis gravi se ligare possit. Ratio est, quia sicut legislator vel superior potest in materia gravi obligare sub*

In case of doubt it may be presumed that the obligation binds *sub gravi*. If the matter of the vow is something commanded by law (*e. g.*, chastity, temperance), failure to keep it would be a twofold sin, either mortal or venial according as the law in question obliges under pain of mortal or of venial sin.

2. If it is either physically or morally impossible to keep a vow, the latter ceases to bind; nor is he who made it obliged to do something which is a mere accessory to the substance of the vow, even if this were possible. If the matter is capable of being divided, as said above, the vow should be lived up to as far as possible.⁶ Fr. Slater illustrates this rule as follows: "One who should vow to fast for a week, if he found this impossible, would not be excused from fasting on the days that he could do so. But if he had vowed to build and decorate a church, and afterwards found this to be impossible, he would not

levi tantum, ita etiam, qui vovet de re gravi, levem tantum obligationem sibi imponere potest. Non tamen vicissim graviter in re levi potest se obligare, quia materia levis gravis obligationis capax non est."

⁶ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2æ, qu. 88, art. 3, ad 2: "*Si illud, quod quis vovit, ex quacunque alia causa impossibile reddatur, debet hoc facere, quod in se est, ut saltem habeat promptam voluntatem faciendi quod potest. Unde ille, qui vovit monasterium aliquod intrare, debet dare operam, quantum potest,*

ut ibi recipiatur. Et si quidem intentio eius fuit se obligare ad religionis ingressum principaliter et ex consequenti eligit hanc religionem vel hunc locum, quasi magis sibi congruentem, tenetur, si non potest ibi recipi, alibi religionem intrare. Si autem principaliter intendit se obligare ad hanc religionem vel ad hunc locum propter specialem complacentiam huius religionis vel loci, non tenetur aliam religionem intrare, si eum illi recipere nolunt."
—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 315.

be bound to build a portion of it, nor to decorate some other church.”⁷

If a vow is unlimited as to *time*, it should be kept as soon as possible and not be postponed without grave reason, especially if, through carelessness or later impossibility of fulfilment, the delay is likely to result in complete nonfulfilment or to render the object of the promise illusory. A merely temporary impossibility does not annul the obligation, which, on the contrary, revives as soon as the obstacle is removed. The term assigned for the fulfilment of a vow should be adhered to, but if it has passed, the neglected duty cannot be validly complied with later.⁸ Violation of a permanent vow (*e. g.*, of virginity) does not annul the obligation,⁹ but may become an im-

⁷ *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 251.

⁸ Deut. XXIII, 21 sqq.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 3, ad 3: “Si in intentione et voluntate voventis est obligare se ad statim solvendum, tenetur statim solvere; si autem ad certum tempus vel sub certâ conditione, non statim tenetur solvere, sed nec debet tardare ultra quam intendit se obligare.”—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, 321: “Quaeritur, quatenam dilatio gravis censenda sit? Resp.: 1°. Gravis est per se quaelibet dilatio voti graviter obligantis, quod tempori determinato affixum est, ut est votum ieiunandi in tali vigilia etc., quia elapso tempore cessat voti obligatio, quae compensari nequit. 2°. Si vero tempus determinatum non fuerit, aut ad urgendam tantum voti

exsecutionem praefixum sit, dilatio notabilis in re gravi peccatum grave erit; qualis autem sit mora notabilis, ex natura rei promissae, ex fine et aliis circumstantiis iudicandum est. Generatim loquendo minor mora requiritur ad grave peccatum, ubi adest periculum oblivionis vel impotentiae, aut imminutio notabilis voti, ut in iis, quae pro tota vita fiunt.”—*Ibid.*, n. 323: “Votum indeterminatum quoad temporis cessationem, v. g. de rosario diurno aut ieiunio singulis sabbatis faciendo, obligat perpetuo, nisi aliud ex circumstantiis colligatur. In dubio, an votum sit temporaneum vel perpetuum, aut pro mense vel anno, minimum tenendum est.”

⁹ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 3, ad 2: “Si ille qui vovit monasterium aliquod in-

portant inducement for the ecclesiastical superior to grant a commutation or a dispensation.

Conditional vows take effect only after the postulated condition has set in. Arbitrarily and maliciously to prevent the condition from being verified, either by intrigue, force, or malice, is forbidden.¹⁰

A *personal vow* binds him who makes it and no one else. A vow conditioned upon the consent of another takes effect only after that consent has been given.

A "real" vow (*votum reale*) falls upon the heirs of him who made it, if the matter involved is one of justice, but it never obliges *ultra vires haereditatis*. The legal obligations of a testator *sub titulo iustitiae* always take precedence of any vows he may have made.¹¹

In regard to *doubtful vows*, Archbishop Simar lays down the following rules:

a) If it is doubtful whether a vow has been made, it may be regarded as not binding. The same rule holds

trare] incidit in impossibilitatem implendi votum ex propriâ culpâ, tenetur insuper de propriâ culpâ praeteritâ poenitentiam agere, sicut mulier, quae vovit virginitatem, si postea corrumpatur, non solum debet servare, quod potest, scilicet perpetuam continentiam, sed etiam de eo, quod amisit peccando, poenitere."

10 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 3, ad 3.—Busembaum, *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I. III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub. 4, n. 11: "*Vota*

conditionata non obligant cessante conditione, etiamsi ipse vovens causa fuerit, ut conditio non poneretur, dummodo id non impediverit per dolum, vim aut malitiam, v. g. vovisti peregrinationem, si eam Petrus approbet, deinde submittis qui persuadeat, ut non approbet; illo igitur non approbante non teneris."

11 H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I. III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub. 4, n. 5-9; Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 323.

with regard to any circumstance of which it is uncertain whether or not it formed part of the vow.

b) If insuperable doubts arise as to the validity of a genuine vow, or if it is uncertain whether the vow has been fulfilled or not, the obligation remains.

c) If there is doubt as to the qualities or extent of the obligation incurred, this doubt must be solved with due regard to current views regarding such matters, and according to the commonly accepted meaning of the terms employed.¹²

The *interpretation* of vows is subject to the same rules as the interpretation of laws.¹³ The decisive factors are: the intention, the nature of the object, and common sense. Consequently, if a man has vowed to make a donation for some religious or charitable purpose, without determining the amount, he may give as much or as little as he pleases, provided, of course, the gift be not so small as to appear a mockery of God rather than the fulfilment of a vow. If one has vowed to give something without reference to quality, it is sufficient to follow common usage or custom. A vow unlimited as to duration (for instance, to recite the Rosary every day) is regarded as perpetual, unless the circumstances of the case indicate a contrary intention.

On account of the responsibility and obligation involved, a Catholic should never make a vow without having consulted his father confessor or some other prudent and experienced guide.

Priests should exercise great caution in regard to vows, especially those intended to be perpetual or to last for a long time. In many cases it may be advisable to impose

¹² H. Th. Simar, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, 3rd ed., p. 284; cfr. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., p. 323.

¹³ See this *Handbook*, Vol. I, pp. 177 sqq.; cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 238 sq.

a period of probation, say one year, after the expiration of which the vow may be renewed.

The so-called pledge (to abstain from intoxicating drink) is no vow, but merely a good resolution made known to a priest, and hence does not oblige *sub gravi*. Sabetti rightly admonishes the clergy to "use great prudence and discretion in receiving such promises."¹⁴

READINGS.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 249 sqq.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 333 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 562 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 277 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, 28th ed., pp. 233 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 231 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 7th ed., pp. 476 sqq., 481 sq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 178 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 328 sqq.

¹⁴ *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, § 150; cfr. *Irish Eccl. Record*, May, 1883, pp. 338 sqq.

SECTION 6

CESSATION OF VOWS

A vow ceases to bind when the time for which it was taken expires, or if a substantial change occurs in the object promised, or if a condition upon which the vow depends is not complied with, or its final cause fails, or, lastly, by irritation, dispensation, or commutation.¹

1. A vow ceases to oblige *per cessationem* if the circumstances under which, or the principal motive or purpose for which the vow was made (*motivum principale*), cease or change. An effect stops with its cause. Thus, if a person for whose recovery I vowed a pilgrimage, should die, or if I can not keep my promise because of changed conditions, or if circumstances supervene which at the outset would have prevented the vow from being taken, the obligation ceases.

In case of a conditional vow no obligation arises if the condition is not complied with. If it is complied with only in part, the obligation becomes modified accordingly.

Substantial error concerning the matter in-

¹ C. I. C., can. 1311.

volved invalidates a vow, for a substantial mistake hinders consent of the will: consent is given to something which is not there, and hence there is no real consent.²

2. *Cessatio per irritationem* or annulment is a declaration of nullity or suspension made by some one who has authority over the will of the *vovens* or the object of the vow.

An annulment is *direct* if the person who has made the vow is subject to the annulling authority, as a child to his parents, a religious to his superior, etc. "Those who are placed in such a state of dependency on their superiors cannot undertake any absolute obligation; they can only bind themselves conditionally, supposing that their superior consents. If he does not consent, the obligation falls to the ground."³

By *indirect* annulment the obligation can be suspended by any one who has authority over the matter of the vow; for, as the same author says, "it is not just that an obligation should be undertaken which interferes with the rights of some one else."⁴

The vows of minor children, therefore, and those of religious, can be directly annulled, *i. e.*, declared to be perpetually null and void, by their parents or superiors. The only exception is the

² Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 247.

Summa Theol. Mor., II, pp. 241 sqq.

³ IDEM, *ibid.*, I, 251; cfr. Noldin,

⁴ Slater, *ibid.*, I, 252.

vow whereby a religious has promised to enter a stricter order.

The vows of children who have attained majority but remain under the tutelage of their parents; the vows of spouses with regard to their marital rights and duties; the vows of ecclesiastical subjects in so far as they affect the personal or "real" rights of their superiors,—all these can be annulled indirectly, *i. e.*, temporarily suspended.⁵ As soon as the person who has made a vow is able to dispose freely of the matter of the promise, the obligation takes effect.⁶

To annul a vow arbitrarily, without sufficient reason, is valid but illicit.⁷

3. *Cessatio per commutationem* takes place when some other good work is substituted, under the same obligation, for a good work promised.⁸ To commute a vow validly and lawfully requires

⁵ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, 324: "*Obligatio voti cessare potest: 1.º Ob causas intrinsecas, scil.: cessatione causae motivae, mutatione substantiali materiae et impossibilitate sive physicâ sive morali. 2.º Ob causas extrinsecas, scil.: irritatione, dispensatione et commutatione. . . Irritatio voti est eius annullatio vel suspensio facta ab eo, cuius potestati subest voluntas voventis aut materia voti. Est 1º directa, si cadat directe in personam voventis; 2º indirecta, si cadat tantum in voti materiam.*" Cfr. n. 325-327; also Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 243.

⁶ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I. III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub.

6, a. 2; n. 8: "*Vota indirecte tantum irrita reviviscunt et obligant, quando alteri desinunt praeiudicare.*"

⁷ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 328: "*Quaeritur, an possit fieri irritatio sine causâ? Resp. Affirmative quoad validitatem, quia dominus valide disponit de re suâ; sed negative quoad liceitatem, quia irrationabiliter impeditur sic profectus spiritualis subditi etc.*"

⁸ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 332: "*Commutatio voti est substitutio alicuius operis loco operis promissi. Fieri potest triplici modo, scil.: in bonum melius, in aequale, in minus.*" Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 251 sqq.

a just cause. The substituted good work may be better than the one originally promised, or of equal or less merit. The person who is under vow may commute it by his own authority into some good work which is evidently better than the one originally promised. This is called *commutatio in melius*. When there is doubt as to the quality of the good work substituted for the one promised, or when the latter turns out to be a work of merely equal (*bonum aequale*) or of less merit (*minus bonum*), the commutation must be made by the competent superior.⁹ But the self-chosen commutation of a vow into something which is of equal merit is morally permissible, and even in regard to the commutation of a vow into something relatively easier or of less value, the confessor should not decide adversely, since the value of the deed depends not so much upon the external good work actually performed, as upon the intention with which it is done and the intrinsic value of the work itself.¹⁰

The rule, however, is that in all cases of com-

⁹ Gury, *op. cit.*, I, n. 333: "*Ex-cipe vota Papae reservata, nisi mutatio fiat in statum religiosum.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 334: "*Qui votum emisit, illud in bonum minus propriâ auctoritate commutare nequit; debet enim Deo dare, quidquid promisit. . . Immo nec potest votum suum mutare in bonum aequale, quia posita promissione merito censetur esse Deo gratius, rem ipsam promissam ex fidelitate praestare, quam*

aliam aequalem eius loco pro suo arbitrio substituere."

¹⁰ Gury, *op. cit.*, n. 334: "*Sacerdos delegatus ad vota commutanda ea in opus notabiliter minus commutare nequit, quia secus ex magnâ parte dispensaret et sic acceptam facultatem excederet. Attamen facultas vota commutandi non est adeo stricte interpretanda, ut ad opus omnino aequale coarctetur, sed in sensu lato accipienda est; secus*

mutation, even when the object of the vow is changed into some thing seemingly better than that originally promised, the individual should not follow his own opinion or inclination, but consult with his confessor or spiritual director.

A vow made on behalf of, and accepted by another, can be commuted only with that other's consent.

One whose vow has been commuted is always free to return to his original promise (*materia voti*),¹¹ for the original good work is supposed to be better than, or of equal merit as, the one substituted therefor, and the commutation was a favor that may be freely renounced.¹²

When a vow has been commuted by ecclesiastical authority, its obligation is extinguished, or transferred to the new work, and does not revive even if the performance of the substituted good work is found to be impossible or useless. On the contrary, when the substitution has been made by private authority, and the performance

enim innumeris difficultatibus et scrupulis obnoxia foret, quum difficillimum sit, aequalitatem invenire in rebus omnino disparatis. Insuper commutatio fieri debet in alleviationem eius, qui sese voto obstrinxit."

¹¹ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I, III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub. 7, n. 5: "*Si is, cuius votum mutatum est, malit deinde implere primum, id potest, tum quia id est*

melius vel aequale, tum quia in eius favorem factum est cum tacitâ conditione, si ei placuerit."

¹² St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I, III, n. 248: "*Vovens etsi redierit ad primum opus, potest tamen iterum redire ad secundum subrogatum. Et praeterea, si pluries facta est commutatio in diversa opera, vovens potest eligere eorum quodcunque malit."* (Ed. Gaudé, I, 532).

of the substituted work is found to be impossible, the original obligation revives.¹³

4. A vow ceases *per dispensationem* if it is condoned in the name of God by one who has spiritual jurisdiction in the external forum.¹⁴ Such a dispensation can be granted only by legitimate authority and for a just cause. As examples of a just and sufficient cause theologians give the following: the public good or the private spiritual advantage of him who is dispensed; unusual difficulty in the observance of the vow; the fact that the vow was taken with insufficient deliberation or at an immature age.¹⁵

¹³ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla*, I. III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub. 7, n. 6: "Si voti legitime a superiore commutati materia sive opus fiat impossibile vel indifferens, non tenetur redire ad prius, quia obligatio extincta est."—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I. III, n. 249: "Factâ voti commutatione, etiamsi res subrogata fiat impossibilis culpâ voventis, vel si ipse eam non impleverit, non tenetur ad primam; v. g. pro eleemosynâ subrogatum est ieiunium tali die: si tunc ieiunare non potuisti vel noluisti, peccasti, sed non teneris ad eleemosynam, quia per commutationem prima obligatio extinguitur. Hoc tamen non currit, si commutatio fiat auctoritate propriâ; tunc enim, si non impletur secundum opus, implendum est primum, quia non extinguitur tunc prima obligatio, sed satisfit per impletionem superabundantem vel saltem æquivalentem."—Slater, *A Manual of Mor. Theol.*, I, 256.

n. 328: "*Dispensatio voti est absoluta eius condonatio nomine Dei a superiore legitimo facta.*"—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 88, art. 10-12.—Slater, *A Manual of Mor. Theol.*, I, 253.

¹⁵ Busembaum, *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I. III, tr. 2, c. 3, dub. 8, resp. 1: "*Ad hanc [dispensationem], ut valeat, iusta causa requiritur, qualis v. g. est: 1. Bonum ecclesiae vel commune reipublicae; 2. Notabilis difficultas in observatione voti; 3. Imperfectio actûs vel levitas ac facilitas, ex qua processit votum.*"—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 329: "*Ad validitatem dispensationis semper iusta causa requiritur; quia, quum vota soli Deo fiant, homo nequit ab iis dispensare, nisi tamquam delegatus; sed delegatus nequit dispensare valide sine ratione sufficienti.*"—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I. III, n. 250-253 (ed. Gaudé, I, 533); Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 245 sqq.

¹⁴ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I,

Dispensation is a subject that properly belongs to Canon Law. We will only note that the Church claims and possesses the power of dispensing from vows;¹⁶ that she exercises this power through the Pope, the bishops, and the superiors of religious orders; and that parish priests and confessors have no jurisdiction in the external forum and, therefore, can dispense from vows by delegated authority only.

READINGS.—C. Kirchberg, *De Voti Natura*, pp. 93 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 575 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., pp. 481 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 283 sq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, 27th ed., pp. 234 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 279 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 239 sqq.—J. d'Annibale, *Summula Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 186 sqq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 183 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 335 sqq.

¹⁶ Wernz, *Ius Decretalium*, Vol. III, n. 584.

CHAPTER III

SACRILEGE

Opposed to sacrifice and vow are sacrilege and simony.

1. *Sacrilege (sacrilegium)* may be defined as *the actual desecration or irreverent treatment of sacred persons, places, or things*. It is the exact counterpart of sacrifice and vow because through sacrifice and vow persons or objects are dedicated to God, whereas sacrilege desecrates and withdraws them from His service;—robs, as it were, the Almighty of that which rightfully belongs to Him; hence the German name "*Gottesraub*."

2. Sacrilege, as indicated, may be *personal, real, or local*.

a) Personal sacrilege (*sacrilegium personale*) is committed by laying violent hands upon, or robbing, clerics or religious; by sins of impurity committed, either in deed or intention, by or with persons consecrated to God by the vow of chastity or by the law of celibacy (*sacrilegium carnale*); or by violating the privilege of clerical immunity from civil jurisdiction, as far as this immunity is still in force.

A violation of the simple vow of chastity, ac-

according to a probable opinion, is not a sacrilege in the proper sense of the term.

b) A real sacrilege (*sacrilegium reale*) is committed by abusing or treating with irreverence sacred things, such as the Sacraments, sacramentals, sacred images, relics, Holy Scripture, sacred vessels or vestments; by stealing an object dedicated to God; by plundering or secularizing convents and pious foundations, etc.¹

c) Local sacrilege (*sacrilegium locale*) is committed by polluting a church, public oratory, or cemetery, *i. e.*, performing therein certain unbecoming actions or committing certain sins which, by their nature, or by special disposition of the law, are particularly repugnant to the reverence due to sacred places. Such sins are, *e. g.*, the unjust shedding of human blood, consummated sins against chastity, and other indecent and irreverent acts.

"It is probable that only external, apparent, and consummated sins against chastity contract the grievous malice of sacrilege from being committed in a church; internal and secret or not consummated sins against purity, which do not pollute the church, probably do not contract the grave malice of sacrilege if they are committed there." ²

¹ Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Mor. Theol.*, Vol. I, pp. 228 sq.

² *Ibid.* Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 189 sq: "Il-

3. Of itself (*ex genere suo*), sacrilege is a mortal sin, because directly opposed to the virtue of religion, but on account of the smallness of the matter sometimes involved (*parvitas materiae*) admits of leniency. The most grievous species of sacrilege is the conscious and deliberate profanation of the Blessed Sacrament.³

The very notion of sacrilege imports an act that is illicit and therefore sinful. To employ for profane purposes an object dedicated to the service of God, is not necessarily always a sacrilege. A church may, in case of necessity, be used as a storage house, or hospital, or dwelling without profanation, and even when the law requires that the ceremony of reconciliation be performed because of pollution, it is not always necessary to assume that a sacrilege has been committed. Similarly, any object

licita humani seminis effusio, quae fieri potest aut per voluntariam pollutionem aut per fornicationem aut per copulam coniugalem, quae citra necessitatem in ecclesia illicita est; necessitas autem ob periculum incontinentiae eam licitam reddit etiam in ecclesia; hac copulâ proinde ecclesia non polluitur. Alia peccata luxuriae externa (tactus, aspectus, sermones turpes), etsi gravia, probabiliter non sunt sacrilegia (gravia). Peccata vero gravia interna (cogitationes et desideria impura) certe non sunt sacrilegia gravia, nisi sit desiderium actus, quo polluitur ecclesia, illudque intra ecclesiam patrandi concipitur."

31 Cor. XI, 27.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 99, art. 3: "Peccatum sacrilegii in hoc consistit, quod aliquis irreverenter se habet ad rem sacram. Debetur au-

*tem reverentia rei sacrae ratione sanctitatis. Et ideo secundum diversam rationem sanctitatis rerum sacrarum, quibus irreverentia exhibetur, necesse est, quod sacrilegii species distinguantur. Tanto enim sacrilegium est gravius, quanto res sacra, in quam peccatur, maiorem obtinet sanctitatem. . . . Et ideo sacrilegium, quod contra hoc sacramentum [Eucharistiae] committitur, gravissimum est inter omnia."—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 275–281.—The New Code says that whoever "species consecratas abiecerit vel ad malum finem abduxerit aut retinuerit, est suspectus de haeresi; incurrit in excommunicationem latae sententiae specialissimo modo Sedi Apostolicae reservatam; est ipso facto infamis, et clericus praeterea est deponendus." (Can. 2320.)*

dedicated to the service of God may be withdrawn from its proper use and employed for profane purposes without a sacrilege, as long as there is no evil intent.

To quote words from Sacred Scripture for other than immediately religious purposes can be regarded as sacrilegious only if it is done with lascivious intent, or in order to mock God or hurt the feelings of others.⁴

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 99.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 33 sqq. (ed. Gaudé, I, 390 sqq.).—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 337 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 598 sqq.—H. Spelmann, *Der Gottesraub*, Ratisbon 1878, pp. 173 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 211 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 249 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 186 sqq.

⁴ F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 337.

CHAPTER IV

SIMONY

Simony is opposed to sacrifice and vow in so far as man, by offering sacrifice or making a vow, relinquishes a part of his property or a right by dedicating it to the service of God, whereas in committing simony he attempts to use that which belongs to God for his own benefit.¹

1. Simony may therefore be defined as *the serious endeavor to buy or sell for a temporal advantage something which is spiritual, or which is annexed to what is spiritual.*²

The expression "serious endeavor" (*studiosa voluntas*) in St. Thomas' definition, which has been embodied in the new Code of Canon Law, emphasizes the fact that, even though no explicit contract exists between the parties concerned, there may still be simony involved.³

¹ Acts VIII, 18 sqq.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 100, art. 1.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, 282–287.

² St. Thomas, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 25, art. 1: "*Studiosa voluntas emendi vel vendendi aliquid*

spirituale vel spirituali adnexum." Cfr. *Prop. damn. sub Innocent. XI*, n. 45–46 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1195 sq.).

³ Slater, *A Manual of Mor. Theol.*, I, 231.

Simony exists only where a material gain is sought or obtained from a spiritual object or function, contrary to natural or positive law. To collect the revenues of a spiritual office and to accept juridically determined emoluments or fees for spiritual functions, such as the so-called *iura stolae*, is in no sense simoniacal, for "the laborer is worthy of his hire," ⁴ and "they that serve the altar partake with the altar." ⁵

But the collection of the revenues of a spiritual charge and the acceptance of legitimate fees may become simoniacal if the office was sought mainly because of its emoluments or if the spiritual rights are exercised principally for the sake of the pecuniary revenues attached thereto.

2. Simony is called *purely mental* when no express contract exists between the parties concerned.

It is *purely conventional* if a contract has been expressly entered into between the parties, but not yet executed by either.

It is *partly conventional* when the contract has been executed by one of the parties.

It is *real* when the contract has been executed by both parties.⁶

Simony is called "of divine law" (*iuris divini*)

⁴ Matt. X, 10; Luke X, 7. Cfr. 1 Tim. V, 18.—O. Link, *Messstipendien*, Ratisbon 1901; Bishop Alex. McDonald in the *Ave Maria*, Notre

Dame, Ind., New Series, Vol. X (1919), No. 25.

⁵ 1 Cor. IX, 4 sqq.

⁶ Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Mor. Theol.*, I, 233.

when the transaction is against the law of God; "of ecclesiastical law" (*iuris ecclesiastici*) when it runs counter to the prohibition of the Church, who in her Code forbids certain contractual dealings in spiritual things.⁷

3. Simony is a grave sin in all its species and does not admit of *parvitas materiae*.

Simony is opposed to justice as well as to religion because by committing it man puts spiritual on a level with material things, conducts himself as though he were in control of divine things, and disobeys the express command of Christ: "Freely have ye received, freely give."⁸

As it is damnable in itself, so simony is detrimental in its effects, because it destroys order and discipline and undermines the respect and obedience due to ecclesiastical authority. The grievously sinful character of this crime is indicated in the words which St. Peter spoke to Simon Magus, when the latter promised to give him a sum of money if he would impart to him the power of the Holy Ghost. "Keep thy money to perish with thee," said the Prince of the Apostles, "because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."⁹

⁷ *Ibid.*; C. I. C., can. 727, 728 sq., 730, 1446, 1465, 2371, 2392.

⁸ Matt. X, 8; Acts VIII, 20; 1 Cor. IV, 1.

⁹ Acts VIII, 20.—Tertullian, *Apol.*, c. 39: "*Praesident probati quique seniores honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti; neque*

Not far removed from simony is the practice of bestowing ecclesiastical offices or benefices upon relatives or favorites, without regard to their qualifications and the general fitness of things, even though there be no desire of material gain (nepotism). The same may be said of unbecoming and improper efforts and means employed for the purpose of obtaining an office or a benefice.¹⁰

"There are some," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "who betake themselves to this state of life [the priesthood] in order to procure a livelihood; so that, like wordlings generally in some kind of sordid occupation, they seem to look to nothing in the priesthood but gain. For although the natural and divine law command that, according to the saying of the Apostle, he who serves the altar should live by the altar; yet, to approach the altar for gain and lucre is sacrilege of the worst kind."¹¹

"As he who serves the altar should live by the altar," says Bishop Linsenmann, "the hope of procuring a livelihood in an ecclesiastical office is not in itself simony, any more than the exchange of a poor benefice for a rich one, because it is essential to ecclesiastical administration that every priest should have an income corresponding to his station in life and his social position. . . . But the Church owes it to herself to prevent even the semblance of commercialism in the appointment of her ministers. The prosperity of a society depends largely upon the honesty and integrity of its officials. An ecclesiastical superior who would knowingly and willingly permit his subjects to degrade themselves by employing improper and ignoble

enim pretio ulla res Dei constat. Etiam si quod arcae genus est, non de honoraria summa quasi redemptae religionis congregatur."
(Ed. Leopold, P. I, 110).

10 F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, p. 338.

11 Catech. Rom., P. II, c. 7, qu. 4.

means in seeking office, would be guilty of immoral conduct." ¹²

From what we have said it is evident that simony is a sin against religion and may in the last analysis be reduced to "real" sacrilege.¹³

There is a subspecies of simony that occurs only in connection with ecclesiastical benefices. It is called *confidential* and consists in this that a man in some way (by election, presentation, bestowal, resignation, etc.) procures an ecclesiastical benefice for another *sub certa confidentialia*, i. e., with the obligation on the latter's part to resign the benefice in favor of the grantor or of a third person, or to pay him a pension or part of the income from the revenues. This form of simony, too, may be mental, conventional or real, and it may be committed in different ways.¹⁴

4. THE DUTY OF RESTITUTION.—An obligation of making restitution of the money or valuables received from a simoniacal transaction may arise from the natural law, from ecclesiastical law, or from both. The natural law demands restitution only if *commutative justice* has been violated; the ecclesiastical law obliges to restitution if religion alone has been violated. If the simoniacal transaction entailed a violation of commutative justice, the restitution must be made before judicial sentence has been rendered; if there was no violation of justice, restitution need

¹² Linsenmann, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

¹³ Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*,

Vol. II, p. 197.

be made only when it is imposed as a penalty and upon conviction by an ecclesiastical judge.

Commutative justice is violated, (a) if a purely spiritual thing which has no material value is given in lieu of a temporal gift; (b) if a charge is made for something which one's office obliges one (*ex iustitia*) to bestow gratis. Hence restitution must be made if one has accepted money for a blessing or a dispensation, for the consecration of a church, etc., or if a pastor has taken pay for catechetical instruction, or a bishop for the bestowal of a benefice.

The ecclesiastical law imposes restitution for simoniacal acts committed, (a) in connection with a benefice, and (b) in connection with entrance upon the religious state.

It follows from what we have said that one who would sell a blessed rosary or holy oils would not be bound to make restitution, unless, of course, the amount received (*propter spirituale adnexum*) exceeded the material value of the object.¹⁵

If the price agreed upon in a simoniacal transaction has not yet been paid, or if restitution of the same has been made, the spiritual thing bargained for must, if possible, be restored to its original owner, unless the latter relinquishes his right. If the price has been paid, but restitution has not yet been made, the spiritual object under consideration, even though it be susceptible of being restored to its original owner, need not be restored unless restitution is enjoined as a penalty for the crime. Hence one who has simoniacally acquired a sacred relic or the *ius patronatus* to a benefice, is not bound to restore the same, because the title of ownership has passed over to him and the Church does not require restitution. But if one has

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

simoniacally obtained a benefice, he must return the same and make restitution of the revenues he has derived therefrom, because the Church has rendered such acquisition invalid under pain of restitution.

If the duty of restitution arises from a violation of commutative justice, the object acquired by simoniacal means must be restored to the person who sold it, unless it be an ecclesiastical benefice. If, on the other hand, the duty of making restitution is based solely upon ecclesiastical law, restitution must be made according to the terms of the latter, which are briefly as follows:

a) If the spiritual thing that formed the object of the simoniacal transaction has not yet been delivered, restitution must be made to him who paid the price, for he is the one who suffered the loss.

b) If the object has changed hands, in case of an ecclesiastical benefice, the purchase price must be restored to the Church with which the benefice is connected, even though no violation of justice was involved; if the object is not a benefice, restitution must be made in favor of the poor.¹⁶

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 25, art. 1.—IDEM, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 100.—Suarez, *De Religione*, l. IV.—A. Leinz, *Die Simonie*, Freiburg 1902.—P. Laymann, *Theol. Mor.*, l. IV, tr. 10, c. 8.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 231 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 194 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, pp. 525 sqq.—La Croix, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 57.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 270 sqq.—J. d'Annibale, *Summula Theol. Mor.*, Vol. III, pp. 90 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 297 sqq.—N. A. Weber, art. "Simony" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 1 sq.—IDEM, *A History of Simony in the Christian Church*, Baltimore 1909.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

CHAPTER V

OATHS

SECTION I

DEFINITION AND DIVISION OF OATHS

1. An *oath* (*iuramentum, iusiurandum*) is the act of calling on God to witness that a statement is true, or to make the fulfilment of a promise binding under a more solemn obligation.¹

The invocation of the divine name means that he who takes an oath calls upon God to testify to the truth of his statement or the sincerity of his promise, under penalty of forfeiting the divine help and grace if he swears falsely. For this reason an oath is an act of extraordinary divine worship (*actus religionis secundarius*.)

In taking an oath we may call on God expressly or tacitly. We do so expressly (*iuramentum explicitum*) if we mention Him by name; we do so tacitly (*iuramentum implicitum*) when we swear by some creature which stands in a special relation

¹ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, l. III, tr. 2, dub. 1: "Haec invocatio in eo consistit, quod iurans, quantum in se est, cupiat ac velit, Deum id, quod iurat, testari

et manifestare (si et quando nimirum illi placuerit, sive in hac vitâ, sive in alterâ) tamquam quod ab ipso Deo sit cognitum et verum."

to God, such as the angels and saints, the cross of Christ, the Gospels or the Sacraments.

2. With regard to its *purpose* an oath is either assertory or promissory.

a) In an *assertory* oath (*iuramentum assertorium*) we call upon God to witness that what we say is true and not otherwise. This kind of oath is employed chiefly in law courts. In its more solemn form (*adiuratio*) it differs from a simple oath in this that the taker does not call upon God as a witness, but merely uses His name in order to ascertain the truth by an appeal to the reverence due to His Divine Majesty and to sacred persons and things.²

b) A *promissory* oath (*iuramentum promissorium*) is one in which God is called upon as a witness to the fulfilment of a future promise or event. Such an oath is, *e. g.*, that taken at a solemn betrothal or by a soldier on the flag.

A subspecies of the promissory oath is that

2 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 295: "Distinguendum est iuramentum: 1.º Assertorium vel promissorium, prout eo veritas tantum asseritur, aut promissio seu pactum firmatur. 2.º Solemne vel simplex, prout fit formâ iure requisitâ solemnibusve caeremoniis, aut privatim, iis seclusis. 3.º Explicitum vel implicitum, prout Deus expresse ut testis veritatis invocatur, aut adhibentur in testimonium creaturae, in quibus attributa divina specialiter relucet. Accedit etiam iuramentum

imprecatorium, quo Deus invocatur simul in testem et in vindicem per iurii."—*Ibid.*, n. 305: "Adiuratio est auctoritativa et deprecativa efflagitatio, interposito nomine Dei vel sanctorum aut rei sacrae facta, ut inducatur alius ad aliquid agendum vel omittendum. Differt igitur a iuramento in eo, quod non inducat Deum ut testem, sed tantum nomen eius interponat ad rem exoptatam efficacius obtinendam ob reverentiam divinitati vel rebus sacris debitam."

called *iuramentum comminatorium*, when God is called upon as a witness that the person who takes the oath has the present intention of injuring his neighbor and as a guaranty that this purpose will be carried out some time in the future.

3. With regard to *form* an oath may be (a) verbal, real, or mixed; (b) solemn or simple.

a) A *verbal* oath (*iuramentum verbale*) is one clothed in words. A *real* oath (*iuramentum reale*) takes the form of an action, *e. g.*, raising the right hand. A *mixed* oath (*iuramentum mixtum*) is one in which words are combined with actions, as in touching the book of the Gospels while pronouncing the usual formula.

In the Middle Ages persons when swearing often touched the Blessed Sacrament, relics of the Saints, sacred vessels, etc. Such an oath was called corporal (*iuramentum corporale*), a term which has nothing to do with the *corporal* or linen cloth on which the Sacred Host is laid, but simply refers to corporal or bodily contact with the sacred object.³

b) A *simple* oath (*iuramentum simplex*) is one taken without ceremonies. A *solemn* oath (*iuramentum solemne*) is one clothed with the ceremonies prescribed by law, such as holding up the right hand or kissing the Bible.

These differences are all formal and do not affect the substance of an oath nor do they pro-

³ *Catholic Dictionary*, 9th ed., p. 617, London 1917.

duce various degrees of obligation. A simple oath is just as binding as a solemn oath, and one made interiorly is as valid as if it were clothed in words or manifested by actions. But the use of symbols and ceremonies is calculated to emphasize the sacredness of the act and consequently has a salutary effect on the minds of men.

Sometimes an imprecation is added to an oath, as, *e. g.*, "So help me God." In this case we have an imprecatory oath; others are called invocatory.⁴

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89–90.—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39.—St. Bonaventure, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39 (*Opera Omnia*, III, 861 sqq.).—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 133–193 (ed. Gaudé, I, 460).—F. Suarez, *De Religione*, tract. V.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moralthologie*, pp. 445 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 380 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Der Eid*, Mayence 1883.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 240 sqq.—Thos. Bouquillon, *De Virtute Religionis*, Part III, Bruges 1880.—Ballerini-Palmieri, *Opus Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 3rd ed., n. 532–601.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 253 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 308 sqq.

⁴ Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 240.

SECTION 2

LAWFULNESS OF OATHS

I. THE TEACHING OF SACRED SCRIPTURE.—That oaths are lawful cannot simply be deduced from the fact that they are acts of divine worship, for they are not usually taken for the purpose of honoring God. The lawfulness of oaths was denied by some of the Church Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, by certain ancient and medieval sects which pretended to restore Christianity to its pristine purity, and by sundry Protestant denominations. All of them maintain that oaths are forbidden by the Bible. The principal texts which they cite in support of their contention are the following:

a) Christ says: “You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not forswear thyself: but thou shalt perform thy oaths to the Lord. But I say to you not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God: nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

But let your speech be yea, yea: no, no: and that which is over and above these, is of evil (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ)." ¹

b) St. James writes: "Above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath. But let your speech be, yea, yea: no, no: that you fall not under judgment." ²

2. These texts, it is asserted, not only forbid wanton, false, and unjust swearing, or swearing by creatures instead of by the Creator, or cursing (which is not really swearing at all, rather a mere profanation of the divine name),³ but oaths as such (*non iurare omnino*). However, the prohibition contained in our Lord's utterance and in that of St. James is plainly not absolute. If it were, Sacred Scripture would contradict itself, for not only has God repeatedly guaranteed His veracity by an oath, but oaths were an acknowledged part of the legal system of the Old Testament.⁴ Christ acknowledged the adjuration addressed to Him by the high priest, for He replied to his query.⁵ St. Paul repeatedly calls

¹ Matt. V, 33-37.

² Jas. V, 12; cfr. Ex. XX, 7; Lev. XIX, 12; Numb. XXX, 3.

³ Cfr. St. Jerome, *In Evangelium Matth.*, l. I, c. 5: "*Hanc per elementa iurandi pessimam consuetudinem semper habere Iudaei noscuntur. . . . Considera, quod hic Salvator non per Deum iurare pro-*

hibuerit, sed per caelum et terram et Ierosolimam et per caput tuum."

(Migne, P. L., XXVI, 39).—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 2, ad 1.

⁴ Deut. VI, 13; Ps. CIX, 4; Luke I, 73.

⁵ Matt. XXVI, 63 sq.

God to witness in a most solemn manner to the truth and sincerity of his preaching,⁶ and in his Epistle to the Hebrews expressly declares that "an oath for confirmation is the end of all controversy."⁷

3. The apparent contradiction between the two series of texts which we have cited can be easily solved. Both our Lord and St. James state it as a moral principle that in the kingdom of God oaths are not necessary, since all men would be honest and veracious if they lived up to His teaching. The disciples are forbidden to swear because oaths are incompatible with the perfect constitution of Christian society. In matter of fact, however, men are *not* perfect. They lie, they mistrust and cheat one another in consequence of the Fall, and whenever important interests are at stake, demand that God be called as a witness, "to whose eyes all things are naked and open" and to whom all men are responsible.⁸ By being asked to swear, a man is reminded of Him who is the author and avenger of the law, and his sense of duty is thereby sharpened.

An oath, therefore, is the highest and securest guarantee of human veracity, but it is at the same time a necessary evil, the last resource of society in sustaining law and order. It is, as the Ro-

⁶ Rom. I, 9; 2 Cor. I, 23; XI, 31; Gal. I, 20; Phil. I, 8.

⁷ Heb. VI, 16.

⁸ Heb. IV, 13; Gen. XXV, 33; Matt. XXVI, 63.

man Catechism truly says, "a remedy of human frailty and a necessary means of proving the truth of what we advance," and "has been instituted on account of human weakness and really proceeds from evil" (*i. e.*, from the depravation of human nature), as "it indicates either the inconstancy of him by whom, or the contumacy of him for whom it is taken, because he cannot otherwise be induced to believe."⁹

If taken under the conditions set forth in our next section, an oath is good and lawful because it presupposes, both in him who demands and in him who takes it, belief in an omniscient, truthful, and just God, and in this sense may be regarded as a solemn profession of faith.¹⁰ This

⁹ *Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 7, 19.

¹⁰ *Professio Fidei Praescripta Waldensibus ab Innoc. III*: "Non condemnamus iuramentum, immo credimus puro corde, quod cum veritate et iudicio et iustitiâ licitum sit iurare" (Denz.-Bannwart, n. 425).—St. Augustine, *De Serm. Dom. in Monte*, l. I, c. 17, n. 51: "Si iurare cogeris, scias de necessitate venire infirmitatis eorum, quibus aliquid suades: quae infirmitas utique malum est. . . . Itaque non dixit: 'quod autem amplius est, malum est.' Tu enim non malum facis, qui bene uteris iuratione, quae etsi non bona, tamen necessaria est, ut alteri persuadeas, quod utiliter suades, sed a malo est illius, cuius infirmitate iurare cogeris." (Migne, P. L., XXXIV, 1255).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 2:

"Iuramentum secundum se est licitum et honestum. Quod patet ex origine et ex fine: ex origine quidem, quia iuramentum est introductum ex fide, quâ homines credunt Deum habere infallibilem veritatem et universalium omnium cognitionem et provisionem; ex fine autem, quia iuramentum inducitur ad iustificandum homines et ad finiendum controversias, ut dicitur (Heb. vi, 16). Sed iuramentum cedit in malum alicui ex eo, quod male utitur eo, id est, sine necessitate et cautelâ debitâ. Videtur enim parvam reverentiam habere ad Deum, qui eum levi causâ testem inducit, quod non praesumeret etiam de aliquo viro honesto. Imminet etiam periculum periurii, quia de facili homo in verbo delinquit (Eccli. xxiii, 9, 12; Iac. iii, 2)."—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 6, 7, 15, 16.

explains why the Church has condemned it as erroneous to deny the lawfulness of oaths.¹¹

5. Oaths being justified only as a necessary means of human intercourse, as an antidote to untruth and dishonesty, and as a corrective of the unreliability of human testimony, their very nature demands that they be administered only in important cases, such as legal proceedings and trials, that no individual take an oath except at the demand of legitimate authority, and that the occasions on which it is demanded be restricted as much as possible, in order that what is in itself a sacred function be not cheapened to the detriment of society and sink to the level of an empty ceremony.¹² The too frequent swearing of oaths diminishes their value and the respect in which they are held by the people.

An oath should be demanded only when it can be made with proper regard to truth and the reverence due to God. No man should be compelled to swear to the truth of a complicated or obscure statement.

It is entirely just and consistent to debar per-

¹¹ *Errores Ioa. Wicliff. damn. a Martino V*, n. 43; *Interrogat. Wicliffitis et Hussitis proponendae*, n. 12 sq.; *Prop. Quesnelli damn. a Clemente XI*, n. 101: "Nihil spiritui Dei et doctrinae Iesu Christi magis opponitur, quam communia facere iuramenta in Ecclesiâ, quia hoc est multiplicare occasiones peierandi, laqueos tendere infirmis et idiotis, et

efficere, ut nomen et veritas Dei aliquando deserviant consilio impiorum."—Cfr. *Prop. Synodi Dioec. Pistor. damn. a Pio VI*, n. 75 (*Denzinger-Bannwart*, n. 623, 662 sq., 1451, 1575).

¹² St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 5.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 19.—F. A. Göpfert, *Der Eid*, 20, 221 sqq.

sons who are notoriously unreliable or immoral, such as profligates, drunkards, usurers, and those convicted of perjury, from taking oaths. But it would be unjust, on the other hand, to demand an oath of the members of religious sects who in good faith reject swearing as immoral. American legislation generally allows such persons to "affirm" the truth of their statements and accepts this affirmation in lieu of an oath. If they "affirm" what is false they are liable to be prosecuted for perjury.

It goes without saying that atheists are incapable of taking an oath; to admit or, *a fortiori*, to compel them to take an oath would be contrary to the very nature of the oath as a religious act.¹³

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 2.—V. Cathrein, S.J., *Moralphilosophie*, 4th ed., Vol. I, pp. 39 sqq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 5th ed., pp. 195 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 265 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 254 sqq.—E. Hubrich, *Konfessioneller Eid oder religionslose Beteuerung*, Leipsic 1900.—N. Cecchini, *Del Carattere Religioso del Giuramento e della Soppressione*, Pistoia 1903.

¹³ Wisd. XIV, 28.—Göpfert, *Der Eid*, pp. 158 sqq.

SECTION 3

CONDITIONS OF VALIDITY AND LICITNESS

St. Jerome, basing on a passage in the prophecies of Jeremias, lays down three conditions which make an oath lawful. These conditions are often called "the companions of an oath." They are: (1) truth, (2) judgment, (3) justice.¹ "And thou shalt swear," the prophet says, "As the Lord liveth, in truth, and in judgment, and in justice."²

1. *Truth* in an oath is the agreement of the assertion made with the mind and conviction of him who swears; or, in other words, an honest intention to state what is so (when the oath is assertory) or to keep the promise made (when the oath is promissory). Conformity of the statement or promise made with the intention of him who makes it is the essential thing, not the actual correctness of the statement itself.³

¹ *In Ierem. Proph.*, 1. I, c. 4: "Simulque animadvertendum, quod iusiurandum hos habeat comites: veritatem, iudicium atque iustitiam; si ista defuerint, nequaquam erit iuramentum, sed periurium." (Migne, P. L., XXIV, 706).

² Jer. IV, 2: "Et iurabis: Vivit

Dominus, in veritate et in iudicio et in iustitia."

³ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 298: "*Veritas, i. e., conformitas assertionis cum intentione et cognitione iurantis. Excludit igitur omne mendacium, non vero omnem errorem. In iuramento assertorio ve-*

Truth requires also that he who swears should use words in the sense in which they are understood by others, or in which others have a right to understand them.⁴ This rule excludes intentional equivocation and secret reservation or mental restriction, as these subterfuges would contravene the purpose of an oath, which is to offer a guaranty of truth to others.⁵

ritas respicit existentiam facti, in promissorio existentiam intentionis."

⁴ "Iurandum est in animum imponentis iudicis."

⁵ Ps. XIV, 1-4; XXIII, 3-6; Heb. VI, 16.—*Prop. damn. sub Innocent. XI, n. 25*: "Cum causâ licitum est iurare sine animo iurandi, sive res sit levis sive gravis."—*Ibid.*, n. 26: "Si quis, vel solus vel coram aliis, sive interrogatus sive propriâ sponte sive recreationis causa sive quocunque alio fine iuret, se non fecisse aliquid, quod reverâ fecit, intellegendo intra se aliquid aliud, quod non fecit, vel aliam viam ab eâ, in qua fecit, vel quodvis aliud additum verum, reverâ non mentitur nec. est periurus."—*Ibid.*, n. 27: "Causa iusta utendi his amphibologiis est, quoties id necessarium aut utile est ad salutem corporis, honorem, res familiares tuendas, vel ad quemlibet alium virtutis actum, ita ut veritatis occultatio censeatur tunc expediens et studiosa."—*Ibid.*, n. 28: "Qui mediante commendatione vel munere ad magistratum vel officium publicum promotus est, poterit cum restrictione mentali præstare iuramentum, quod de mandato regis a similibus solet exigi, non habito respectu ad intentionem exigentis, quia non tenetur fateri crimen occultum." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1175 sqq.). All these propositions

were condemned. Cfr. further on this subject, H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla*, I. III, tr. 3, c. 2, dub.

4: "Iurare cum æquivocatione, quando iusta causa est et ipsa æquivocatio licet, non est malum, quia ubi est ius occultandi veritatem, et occultatur sine mendacio, nulla irreverentia fit iuramento."—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I. III, n. 151 sq., 170.—Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 299: "Quæritur, an liceat iurare cum restrictione mentali. Resp. Negative, si sit pure mentalis; secus vero, si late mentalis sit, ex gravi causâ."—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 11th ed., n. 918, 4: "Quando licite utor restrictione non pure mentali, fere etiam, pro gravitate causæ, cum tali restrictione iurare licet. Si vero interrogans ius ad plenam veritatem habet, cum restrictione iurare est omnino periurium; si alter ius non habet, sed loquens ex leviori causa cum restrictione iurat, ex circumstantiis damnorum iudicandum est, utrum pro periurio haberi debeat, an solum temere iurasse dicendus sit."—According to Lehmkuhl the theses quoted at the beginning of this note were condemned by the Holy See for two reasons: first, because not everything contained therein constitutes a legitimate cause, and, secondly, because not

An attempt has been made to apply the doctrine of mental restriction to oaths by distinguishing between the *animus iurandi* and the *animus se obligandi*. "The many points of view," says Dr. Mausbach, "which oaths, and especially promises confirmed by oath, permitted, appealed to the Scholastic desire of making distinctions and admitted of much logical analysis. It was sought to distinguish the interests of truth, religion, loyalty, and justice, which are all interwoven in such an oath, and the question was asked, how far they belonged to the essence of the oath or were separable from it. The larger works on casuistry contain investigations into the relation of the *intentio iurandi*, the *intentio se obligandi* (*ex religione, ex iustitia*, etc.), and the *intentio implendi*, which are marvels of ingenuity and almost bewilder an ordinary reader, yet are specially designed to avert all misunderstanding. The short summaries of them, however, given in compendia of casuistry, are more open to criticism. . . . One of the most dangerous of these statements is said to be the assertion that an oath is not valid if the man taking it has an inward intention not to take an oath before God. In this way, we are told, the trustworthiness of the oath is undermined and public confidence deeply shattered." ⁶

Dr. Mausbach proceeds to show at some length that this objection is not justified by the actual teaching of Catholic

everything is understood of mental reservation in the broad sense of the term (*de restrictione late mentali*). St. Alphonsus and other moralists take also prop. 28 to refer to the *restrictio pure mentalis*, and others say that it applies to the *restrictio non pure mentalis*, because there is question here of one of those cases in which mental reservation is absolutely excluded. Cfr. F. A. Göpfert,

Moraltheologie, Vol. II, 6th ed., p. 332; IDEM, *Der Eid*, pp. 211 sqq.; F. Kössing, *Über die Wahrheitsliebe*, Paderborn 1893, pp. 145 sq.; Jos. Mausbach, *Catholic Moral Teaching and its Antagonists*, pp. 113 sqq., New York 1914; Jos. Rickaby, S.J., *Political and Moral Essays*, pp. 215 sqq., London 1902.

⁶ Jos. Mausbach, *Catholic Moral Teaching*, pp. 108 sq.

moralists, who all agree that such a *fictio* or *simulatio* is sinful, because it involves a misuse of the name of God, and a lie, since the spoken words contradict the inward thought. We are never allowed to commit even a venial sin. If it is said that the horror of venial sin is not nearly so deterrent in its effect as the dread of committing perjury, and the moralists, by questioning the validity of an oath when it has apparently been taken in all seriousness, favor a distortion of the truth and imperil public confidence, the answer is that the same moralists regard simulation as a very grievous sin when the declaration apparently made under oath is false, no matter whether it concerns an important or a trivial matter, and they do the same whenever the declaration, even if true, is received in a court of law or in any legal proceeding as made upon oath.

The case is similar when, in a promissory oath, the intention of fulfilling the promise is defective. Here the question of the venial nature of the sin committed refers only to the simulation as such. It affects a statement that is true and a promise that is seriously meant, and it does so under circumstances in which neither the State nor the individual has any right to require an oath. "As soon as there is any violation of the truth, the invocation of the name of God, made apparently in earnest, becomes, in spite of the reservation, a grievous insult to God's honor, about equivalent to perjury. Moreover, just as soon as public or private rights require a declaration to be made under oath, even a true declaration failing to be under oath is to be regarded as a grievous sin. This guards against all abuse of the principle. According to this exposition, a man with an honest intention had better take an oath seriously, for thus he is free from sin; whereas *simulatio* is in any case a venial sin, and in cases where an

oath can legally be required, it is a mortal sin. A man who intends to lie, need not hope to escape grievous sin by means of *simulatio*; whether he is guilty of perjury in the strict sense of the word is, after all, only a matter of words."⁷

To the question, why the moralists did not simply admit that an oath was really an oath, unless some external circumstances plainly showed it to be fictitious or taken in jest, the same writer replies that they did not do so because, according to their ideas of religion and justice, it would have injured the true character and value of an oath. "They recognized the fact that an oath devoid of inward intention must still be *treated* as a real oath, but that an oath unaccompanied by a serious act of the will should be *called* a true oath seemed to them as inadmissible as to call a corpse a human being; the soul is wanting in both cases. It was not a lax, but rather a profound, appreciation of the dignity of an oath that caused this view to be adopted. An oath was regarded as an act of the religious life or cultus. Now it was well known that the performance of sacramental rites, though externally perfect, was null and void without the inward intention. Absence of consent in the Sacrament of Matrimony nullifies the mutual pledge and destroys the validity of a marriage, even though the external forum may maintain its validity until evidence to the contrary is supplied. If, in

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 110 sq. Dr. Mausbach adds in a note (*l. c.*): "Lugo describes the sin simply as *periurium*. He says: '*Nec excusaretur a periurio, qui absque intentione iurandi iuraret exterius falsum per verba, quae hic et nunc determinate et omnino significant animum iurandi et invocandi Deum in testem.*' (*De Iust. et Iure*, disp. 23, n. 12). The non-fulfilment of a promise made

sub facto iuramento must also be considered equivalent to perjury. For if contempt of God is shown by apparently calling upon Him to witness a lie, it is certainly a great insult to Him to be false to a pledge placed under His authority. There are some moralists who have not made this latter point sufficiently clear."

a case like this, where one human being directly confronts another, it is the *interior intention* that decides the question of validity, this appeared to be still more true in the case of an oath, where a human being stands up before God and invokes Him as a witness and a surety. The specific character of an oath and its quasi-sacramental dignity could not, it was thought, exist if the will did not consent to this specific moral obligation.”⁸

By the omission of several essential remarks from statements made by St. Alphonsus, Gury, and other moralists, their teaching on the subject of oaths and contracts has been seriously distorted. When they deny the “validity” of a fictitious promise, they do so on the strength of the principle so forcibly pointed out by Dr. Mausbach, and, as a rule, with all the reservations demanded both by a sense of justice and by regard for public security.⁹

St. Alphonsus, who has been criticized with particular severity for his teaching, on account of a brief reference to the question, says in another place, to which he expressly refers the reader: “In order that human intercourse may remain duly regulated, the natural law requires for the public welfare that there should be no deception with regard to contracts, and therefore it binds those who have recourse to *simulatio*, in punishment for their deception, to indemnify the deceived party exactly as if no deception had taken place.”¹⁰

2. A man swears with *judgment* (*iudicium in iurante, iudicium discretionis ex parte iurantis*) when he has a just cause for invoking the testimony of God, and performs the act with due

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 110 sq.; cfr. F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 450 sq.

⁹ J. Mausbach, *ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁰ *Theol. Mor.*, I, III, n. 709; cfr. Mausbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 sq.

attention and reverence.¹¹ Judgment presupposes maturity of mind, understanding, and careful consideration of the statement or promise made, together with the full use of reason and will-power and calmness at the time the oath is taken. For this reason minors, weak-minded persons, and those who are insane or under the influence of liquor or drugs, are unable to take an oath. Physical compulsion, essential error, and violent fear which excludes deliberation, make an oath invalid, whereas purely moral compulsion or ordinary fear do not entail invalidity, but merely constitute a ground for dispensation.

Since an oath can be taken only with due care and deliberation, a man who wishes to swear, or is compelled to do so, is strictly obliged to consider the matter and the circumstances of the case, and must not allow himself to be moved by love, hatred or any other emotion, but solely by the importance and necessity of the oath he is taking, for without careful consideration an oath will nearly always be hasty or indiscreet.¹²

11 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 298: "*Iudicium, id est discretio seu causa rationabilis iurandi; iuramentum enim, quum sit res sanctissima, non debet adhiberi promiscue, sed cum pietate et magnâ reverentiâ.*"—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 3, ad 1: "*Iudicium non sumitur hic executione iustitiae, sed pro iudicio discretionis. Neque etiam veritas hic accipitur secundum quod est pars iustitiae, sed*

secundum quod est quaedam conditio locutionis."—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39, art. 2, qu. 3, ad 1-2.

12 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 3, ad 2: "*Devotio et fides et omnia huiusmodi, quae exiguntur ad debitum modum iurandi, intelleguntur in iudicio.*"—*Ibid.*, art. 7: "*Si est talis res, quae in eius potestate non fuit, deest iuramento discretionis iudicium, nisi*

"A just cause [*iusta causa iurandi*] will be any matter of some importance for the welfare of either soul or body, whether it be public or private. We are not, therefore, justified in swearing to every assertion which we believe to be true; there must be some special reason for employing the name and authority of God to confirm what we say. However, provided that the other conditions are not wanting, the defect of judgment in swearing will not be more than a venial sin, for it is no more than the idle use of the name of God."¹³

3. By *justice* in swearing (*iustitia in obiecto*) is meant the moral permissibility or becomingness (*honestas*) of the matter concerning which an oath is taken.¹⁴ Justice requires that the matter of an oath should be in conformity with the moral law and Christian duty. Thus in an assertory oath the assertion should not be sinful,

forte, quod erat ei possibile, quando iuravit, reddatur ei impossibile per aliquem eventum."—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39, art. 2, qu. 3, ad 4: "*In iudicio, quod est discretio iurantis, includitur debita forma et eventus et tempus et omnia quae ex parte iurantis considerata occurrunt.*"—Cfr. *Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 13.—F. A. Göpfert, *Der Eid*, pp. 219 sqq.

13 Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 242.—Cfr. Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 299: "*Quaeritur, quatenus sit causa sufficiens ad iurandum? Resp. Quaecunque causa honesta alicuius ponderis, v. g. pax confirmanda in familiis, maior securitas in contractibus etc.*"—St. Thomas, *Comment. in Hebr.*, c. VI, lect. 3: "*Causae, in quibus liceat iurare, hae sunt: Pro pace firmandâ, sicut La-*

ban iuravit (Gen. xxxi, 48); secundo, pro famâ conservandâ; tertio, pro fidelitate tenendâ sicut feudatarii iurant dominis; quarto, pro oboedientiâ implendâ, si praecipitur a superiori aliquid honestum; quinto, pro securitate faciendâ; sexto, pro veritate attestandâ."

14 Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 298: "*Iustitia, id est ut iuramentum sit de re licitâ et honestâ; sic contra iustitiam iuraret, qui iuramento se obligaret ad rem proximo noxiam vel aliunde prohibitam, aut qui proximo detraheret.*"—Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 3 ad 2: "*Alia duo [iustitia et veritas] pertinent ad rem, de quâ iuratur, quamvis posset dici, quod iustitia pertinet ad causam, pro quâ iuratur.*"

and in a promissory oath that which is promised must be morally good and lawful.¹⁵ Therefore an obligation assumed by oath to commit an act of injustice or a sin is always null and void.¹⁶ An oath so taken would, of course, be doubly sinful. To this class of invalid and unlawful oaths belong those taken by conspirators in crime, members of forbidden societies, such as anarchists, Freemasons, etc.

4. Of the *formulas* employed in swearing some certainly involve an oath, either explicitly or implicitly, whereas others are doubtful, while still others signify no oath at all.

a) Explicit forms of swearing are the following: "God be my witness," "I swear by God or Christ," "May God punish me if I do not tell the truth," etc. Even the simple phrase: "I swear," suffices to constitute an oath if the intention of calling upon God as witness is manifest.

b) Implicit forms of swearing are the following: "I swear by the Blessed Virgin," "by the cross," or "by the Sacraments," etc. He who swears thus may justly be supposed to invoke God as a witness to the truth of

¹⁵ Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 242.

¹⁶ Cfr. Matt. XIV, 7; Mark VI, 22 sqq.; Acts XXIII, 12.—*Reg. Iuris in Sexto Decr. Bonifat. VIII*, n. 58: "Non est obligatorium contra bonos mores praestitum iuramentum."—St. Ambrose, *De Offic.*, I, III, c. 12, n. 76: "Nihil [christianus] promittat inhonestum, ac si promiserit, tolerabilius est promissum non facere, quam facere, quod turpe est."—*Ibid.*, n. 77: "Herodes saltatrici praemium turpiter promisit,

crudeliter solvit. Turpe, quod regnum pro saltatione promittitur; crudele, quod mors prophetae pro iurandi religione donatur. Quanto tolerabilius tali fuisset periurium sacramento? Si tamen periurium posset dici, quod ebrius inter vina iuraverat, quod eviratus inter saltantium choros promiserat. Infertur disco prophetae caput, et hoc aestimatum est fidei esse, quod amentiae fuit." (Migne, P. L., XVI, 167).

¹⁷ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 258 sq.

what he affirms. Ordinarily, however, those who habitually use such expressions as "by God," "by heavens," etc., do not think of God, and therefore these phrases as a rule do not imply an oath because the intention is lacking.

c) Ambiguous formulas are: "Upon my word," "Upon my oath," "Upon my faith," "As God lives," "God knows that . . .," etc. These phrases indicate a real oath when there is an evident intention to swear, or when they are uttered in court in lieu of an oath. But if there is no intention of taking an oath, such words may be taken simply *enuntiative*, *i. e.*, as a means of creating confidence, not *invocative*, *i. e.*, as calling God to witness. Hence, in ordinary conversation, the phrase "I swear that I will do this or that," or "Upon my oath I will do so and so," does not, as a rule, indicate the intention of taking a real oath, but merely that of making a solemn affirmation.

d) Such expressions as "truly," "surely," "certainly," "As surely as I live," "I will die on the spot," "Let my ears be cut off," "May the devil get me if this is not true," etc., are *mere exaggerations* and imply no invocation of God. Therefore if an untruth is affirmed by means of these and similar phrases, this manner of affirmation in itself constitutes merely a venial sin, though the lie may be mortal. Only when the formula contains mention of a punishment to be inflicted by God, as, "May lightning strike me if this be false," can there be question of a genuine oath.

If a priest asserts something upon his honor as a priest, he does not swear an oath, but simply affirms in a solemn manner.

Certain expressions in which the truth of an assertion is compared to the dogmas of religion, *e. g.*, "It is as true as that there is a God in Heaven," "I am as innocent

as the Blessed Virgin Mary," etc., are held by some theologians to be genuine oaths involving blasphemy; but we prefer to hold with Noldin that they neither constitute an oath, because God is not invoked as a witness, nor involve blasphemy (provided the assertion made is true), because the person who uses such an expression intends merely to assert a similarity between the certainty of his assertion and that of the revealed truth, not their equality. However, those who employ such phrases sin venially by taking the name of God in vain, and if the assertion made is false, they also commit objective blasphemy.

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 3.—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39, art. 1-3.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 450 sqq.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 241 sq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Der Eid*, Mayence 1883, pp. 221 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 257 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 266 sqq.

SECTION 4

SINS COMMITTED IN CONNECTION WITH OATHS

Whenever any one of the conditions required for the lawfulness of an oath is wanting, he who swears it commits a sin.

If the condition lacking is truth, the sin committed is called perjury (*periurium*); if judgment, the sin is called unjustifiable swearing; if justice, we say that the *vovens* swears unjustly.

I. PERJURY.—Perjury (*periurium*, *peieratio*, *iuramentum falsum*) may be defined as calling on God to witness the truth of an assertion which we know to be false, or in confirmation of a promise which we do not intend to keep.¹

a) The moral guilt of perjury is measured, not by the importance of the matter involved, *i. e.*, the

¹ Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, III, dist. 39, n. 1: "*Periurium est mendacium iuramento firmatum.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 2: "*Creditur et ille peierare, qui falsum voluntate fallendi iurat, et qui falsum putans, quod verum est, iurat, et qui verum putans, quod falsum est, iurat.*" (Migne, P. L., CXCII, 835).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 98, art. 1: "*Morales actus ex fine speciem sortiuntur. Finis autem iuramenti est*

confirmatio dicti humani, cui quidem confirmationi falsitas opponitur. Per hoc enim confirmatur aliquod dictum, quod ostenditur firmiter esse verum, quod quidem non potest contingere de eo, quod falsum est. Unde falsitas directe evacuat finem iuramenti, et propter hoc a falsitate praecipue specificatur perversitas iuramenti, quae periurium dicitur. Et ideo falsitas est de ratione periurii."

assertion or promise made under oath, but solely by the perjurer's knowledge of its untruth. This applies to simple (*periurium simplex*) and also, *a fortiori*, to solemn perjury (*periurium solemne*), when the false oath is taken after due instruction and admonition and with the ceremonies prescribed by law.

Perjury is *ex toto genere suo* a grievous sin, being not merely a qualified lie, an attack upon the highest guaranty of veracity, and a criminal profanation of the name of God, but likewise a public scandal and a sin against religion,² which even the civil law punishes severely.³ As a rule this sin involves a gross violation of justice against one's neighbor and against society.

All sins of perjury are of the same moral species as the various oaths themselves. This holds even of the so-called *periurium exsecratorium*, which involves cursing one's neighbor, though we do not, of course, mean to

² Zach. VIII, 17; Mal. III, 5; 1 Tim. I, 8-10.—*Prop. damn. sub Innocent. XI*, n. 24: "*Vocare Deum in testem mendacii levis non est tanta irreverentia propter quam velit aut possit damnare hominem.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 25: "*Cum causâ licitum est iurare sine animo iurandi, sive res sit levis sive gravis.*" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1174 sq.)—Cfr. the Bull "*Inter cunctas*," of Pope Martin V, n. 14 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 664).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 98, art. 2: "*Iurare est Deum testem invocare. Pertinet autem ad Dei irreverentiam, quod aliquis eum testem invocet fal-*

sitatis, quia per hoc dat intellegere, vel quod Deus veritatem non cognoscat vel quod falsitatem testificari velit. Et ideo periurium manifeste est peccatum religioni contrarium, cuius est Deo reverentiam exhibere."—*Ibid.*, art. 3: "*Quidquid est, quod de sui ratione pertinet ad contemptum Dei, est peccatum mortale. Periurium autem de sui ratione importat contemptum Dei; ex hoc enim habet rationem culpae, quia ad irreverentiam Dei pertinet. Unde manifestum est, quod periurium ex sui ratione est peccatum mortale.*"

³ Cfr. F. Bittner, *Lehrbuch der kath. Moraltheologie*, pp. 376 sq.

deny that if the evil is wished seriously, it entails an additional sin against charity.⁴

The alarming increase of perjury in our time is no doubt largely attributable to the decline of religious faith and the growing carelessness in matters of morals. Another, minor cause is the unnecessary multiplication of oaths and the frivolous manner in which they are often administered by public officials. This abuse should be cured by the State, but the Church can aid powerfully by influencing the consciences of men. "We are forbidden to take the divine name in vain," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent; "for he who is led to make oath, not by deliberation, but by rashness, evidently involves himself in grievous sin. That this is a most grievous crime, these very words declare: 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,' words which, as if to assign the reason why this is so grievous an enormity, namely, because the majesty of Him is abased whom we profess to be our Lord and our God. By this commandment, therefore, it is forbidden that men swear falsely; for he who shrinks not from the enormity of calling God to witness falsehood, offers a signal injury to God, branding Him either with ignorance, as though the truth of anything could be hidden from Him, or at least with improbity and depravity, as though He would by testimony confirm falsehood." ⁵

In some dioceses perjury committed in a court of law is a reserved case in both the internal and the external forum. (Cfr. *C.I.C.*, can. 2323.)

b) Akin to perjury is the wilful breaking of a valid oath or the intentional nonfulfilment of a

⁴ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 268.

⁵ *Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 20.

promise given under oath (*fractio iuramenti promissorii*). The sinfulness of this act depends not only on the degree of malice inherent in the will, but likewise on the extent to which the oath is actually broken. To neglect to keep a promissory oath is, therefore, *ex genere suo* a grievous sin because the obligation imposed by such an oath is grievous. It permits, however, of *parvitas materiae*. "He who binds himself by an oath to the performance of something, not intending, however, to fulfil his promise, or having had the intention, really neglects its performance, is guilty of the same sin [as he who commits perjury]; and this applies also to those who, having bound themselves to God by the covenant of a vow, fulfil it not."⁶

The validity and binding force of a promissory oath may not be presumed, either morally or legally, but must be *proved*, for the principal factor is the promise, the oath being merely an accessory to the principal. Hence if the promise was invalid, because of physical or moral inability to keep what was promised, it remains invalid even if an oath was taken to confirm it, and if it becomes invalid later, the obligation arising from the oath ceases, according to the axiom, "*Cessante principali cessat accessorium.*"

⁶ Cat. Rom., P. III, c. 3, qu. 23: "Eiusdem peccati reus censendus est, qui se aliquid iureiurando facturum promittit, quum tamen aut

promissum implere in animo non fuerit, aut si fuit, quod promisit re ipsâ non praestat."

2. Unjustifiable or careless swearing (*iuramentum vanum sive incautum*) is not grievously sinful unless it involves formal contempt of God,⁷ but it easily leads to perjury and should therefore be avoided.⁸ To this class of acts belong the oaths of those who habitually call upon God in trivial matters, such as buying and selling, though they really have no intention of taking an oath.⁹

3. To swear unjustly (*iuramentum iniustum*) means to affirm under oath something that is false or promise something that is forbidden. It is a grievous sin because it involves an abuse of God's

⁷ H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, 1. III, tr. 2, c. 2, dub. 3, n. 1: "Quoad iudicium, si hoc solum desit, ut plurimum est veniale tantum, ut si quis absque necessitate iuret, sive ex levitate quadam animi sive ex consuetudine."—*Ibid.*, n. 2: "Mortaliter tamen etiam hic aut venialiter peccari potest iuxta quantitatem neglegentiae, quam iurans admittit in investigatione veritatis vel tollendâ consuetudine."—*Ibid.*, n. 3: "Et sic mortalis est status illorum, qui non tollunt consuetudinem iurandi sine attentione, sitne verum hoc an falsum, quod iurare solent."

⁸ Ecclus. XXIII, 9.—St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 157 (al. 89), c. 5, n. 40: "Iurationem cave, quantum potes. Melius quippe nec verum iuratur, quam iurandi consuetudine et in periurium saepe caditur et semper eriurio propinquatur. . . . Non ideo quia in suis litteris iuravit Apostolus [Paulus], vir in veritate firmis-

simus, ludus nobis debet esse iuratio. Multo enim tutius, ut dixi, quantum ad nos attinet, nunquam iuramus. . . . Non quia peccatum est, verum iurare, sed quia gravissimum peccatum est, falsum iurare, quo citius cadit, qui consuevit iurare." (Migne, P. L., XLXIII, 693).—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 89, art. 3, ad 3: "In iuramento est periculum magnum, tum propter Dei magnitudinem, cuius testimonium invocatur, tum etiam propter labilitatem linguae humanae, cuius verba iuramento confirmantur. Et ideo huiusmodi [iustitia, iudicium et veritas] magis requiruntur ad iuramentum, quam ad alios humanos actus."

⁹ *Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 3, qu. 13: "Cuiusmodi et illorum irreligiosa affirmatio, qui in re levissimâ et inani nullâ ratione aut consilio, sed pravâ quadam consuetudine iurant. Id vero passim quotidie a venditoribus et emptoribus fieri videmus."

holy name for the purpose of doing evil.¹⁰ To keep such an iniquitous oath would, of course, be an additional sin.¹¹

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 98.—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 39, art. 4.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 429 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Der Eid*, pp. 365 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 267 sqq.

¹⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 98, art. 2, ad 1: "Ille, qui iurat, se facturum aliquid illicitum, iurando incurrit periurium propter defectum iustitiae."—Cfr. H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, I, III, tr. 2, c. 2, dub. 3, n. 4: "Quod ad iustitiam spectat, peccat mortaliter, qui iurat se facturum rem mortaliter malam, ut se aliquem interfectorum, quia est gravis irreverentia, divina auctoritate se ad peccatum mortale quasi obligare, ita ut hic duae malitiae concurrunt, una quod velit malum, altera quod ad hoc abutatur auctoritate Dei odio habentis omne malum."—*Ibid.*, n. 5:

"Venialiter autem peccat, qui iurat facere rem venialiter malam aut vanam aut inutilem aut frivolam, quum ibi levis tantum irreverentia censeatur."—*Ibid.*, n. 6: "Item peccat venialiter, qui iurat aliquid contra consilia evangelica, ut se non ingressurum religionem, non daturum elemosynam aut mutuum."

¹¹ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 304: "Nunquam obligatur iuramento, qui rem malam iuravit, immo dupliciter peccat, si iuramentum adimpleat, nempe contra religionem et virtutem, cui opponitur materia iuramenti."

CHAPTER VI

SUPERSTITION

SECTION I

NATURE OF SUPERSTITION

I. DEFINITION.—Superstition (*δεισιδαιμονία*, *superstitio*, *falsa religio*) is the vice of excess in religious worship. Not as if it were possible to give God too much honor, but we may honor Him in the wrong way (*modo indebito*) or give to other persons (or to things) the worship due to Him alone (*cultus falsus*).¹

St. Thomas divides superstition into four classes, namely: worshipping God in the wrong way, idolatry, divination, and vain observance.²

Superstition, therefore, not only involves a false religious belief, but adds to that belief (*vana opinio*) a misdirected act (*vana observantia*). In other words, it substitutes for the true faith and the right worship of God a false belief and a wrong worship. Therefore supersti-

¹ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 92, art. 1: "*Superstitio est vitium religioni oppositum secundum excessum, non quia plus exhibeat in cultum divinum quam vera*

religio, sed quia exhibet cultum divinum vel cui non debet, vel eo modo, quo non debet."

² *Ibid.*

tion is directly opposed to the virtue of faith, like heresy and unbelief, and more generally, to the virtue of religion (*virtus religionis*),³ and is consequently called the false imitator of true piety (*verae pietatis falsa imitatrix*).⁴

2. NATURE OF SUPERSTITION.—Superstition as a false belief and a wrong worship is both an intellectual aberration and a moral fault. It is a grievous sin because it runs counter to true faith and right reason. It surrenders the substance of the true faith (*fides quae creditur*) as well as its theological motive (*fides quâ creditur*) by substituting its own notions for the revealed truth and by rendering obedience, not to the legitimate divine authority, but to irrational human opinion.

Superstition, moreover, entails many evil consequences. Under the influence of fear and terror it produces fanaticism and fatalism, makes men hard and cruel, and thereby corrupts individuals and endangers society.

Superstition, when complete, that is, when consciously harbored and allowed to influence one's moral and religious life, is *ex genere suo* a mortal sin because it contravenes the faith, religious practice, and reason.

However, not every kind or degree of superstition is *eo ipso* destructive of the Catholic faith

³ *Supra*, Part I.

⁴ *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XXII, *Decr. de Observand. et Evitand. in*

Celebrat. Missae.—On the derivation of the word "superstition" see Walter, *Der Aberglaube*, pp. 11 sq.

and of the true worship of God, more particularly if, as is often the case, the false belief arises from invincible ignorance.⁵

Pastors are in duty bound to acquaint themselves with the different forms of superstition current among their people. Superstition fears the light and is, therefore, hard to combat. The most effective weapon against it is instruction on the nature and operation of God, for the purer man's knowledge of God, the less chance has superstition to grow in the soul. We must show that superstition is both foolish and dangerous.⁶ It is folly to assume that superstition, because it leads people to believe too much, is apt to strengthen religion and piety. Superstition means not merely to believe too much, but to believe what is false, and therefore is essentially inimical to true piety. On the contrary, the firmer the grasp a man has on his religion, the more energetically will he reject every kind of superstition and unhealthy craving for miracles.⁷

Faith does not engender superstition; contrariwise, superstition is a child of unbelief. As Pascal justly observes, "Unbelievers are the most credulous of men." We have all known persons who boasted of their unbelief, yet were scared to death if they happened to be one of a group of thirteen sitting at table.⁸

⁵ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 257: "*Vana observantia est peccatum grave ex genere suo, quia honorem divinum creaturae tribuit, ab ea expectando, quod a solo Deo expectari debet, et quia in pacto implicito cum daemone nititur. Veniale tamen saepe esse potest ex imperfectione actus, ex simplicitate, ignorantia aliquâ vel ex timiditate,*

ut evenit praesertim inter rudes in observantia eventuum."

⁶ 2 Kings I, 2-4; Acts XIII, 8-11.

⁷ C. Krieg, *Die Wissenschaft der Seelenleitung*, Vol. I, pp. 248 sq., Freiburg 1904.

⁸ J. H. Graf, *Ueber Zahlenaberglauben, insbesondere die Zahl 13*, Bern 1904.

Superstition may manifest itself in the natural, in the preternatural, and in the strictly supernatural sphere.

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 92 sq.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 1-11, 14-28.—Ferraris, *Prompta Bibliotheca*, s. v. "Superstitio."—H. Th. Simar, *Der Aberglaube*, 2nd ed., Cologne 1879.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 608 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, 6th ed., pp. 493 sqq.—F. Walter, *Aberglaube und Seelsorge*, Paderborn 1904.—W. Fischer, *Aberglaube aller Zeiten*, Paderborn 1906.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 163 sqq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 275 sqq.—J. Wilhelm, art. "Superstition" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 339 sqq.

SECTION 2

SUPERSTITION IN THE NATURAL ORDER

1. ORIGIN.—The varied and mysterious processes and phenomena of nature place man before a multitude of riddles. Science has succeeded in clearing up some of these, but many more remain unexplained and give rise to superstitious notions and fears. Instead of awaiting further reliable information, credulous persons are prone to attribute the things they cannot understand to preter- or supernatural causes. They honor and revere these mysterious powers, endeavor to obtain their aid, try to fathom them in order to turn them to their own advantage, either by obtaining remedies or preventives for disease or by peering into the future.

2. DIFFERENT KINDS OF SUPERSTITION.—The principal species of superstition in the natural order are the following:

a) *Ordeals (iudicia Dei sive divina)*, a form of superstition wherein supernatural aid is invoked in the place of evidence, as in trial by fire, water, poison, or battle. This was formerly conceived as an immediate appeal to the judgment of

God. There were various forms of ordeal. The hand was plunged into boiling water, a red-hot iron was carried nine paces, etc. If no injury appeared after three days, the accused was declared innocent.¹

b) Divination (*divinatio*) is the pretended forecasting of future events by means of the stars (astrology), or the lines of the hand (chiromancy, palmistry), or the bumps of the skull (phrenology), by signs or omens (augury), the laying of cards, the study of meteorological conditions, and the interpretation of dreams.²

Astrology is nearly as old as the human race.* At all times there have been men who believed that the "stars," particularly the planets, not only fortell, but also influence the future. The astrologer gives his judgment by

¹ Knight, *England*, Vol. I, ch. 8, p. 33; A. Franz, *Das Rituale von St. Florian*, pp. 180 sqq.; IDEM, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen*, Vol. II, pp. 307 sqq.

² St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 95, art. 1: "Si quis huiusmodi futura praenuntiare aut praenoscere quocunque modo praesumpserit, nisi Deo revelante, manifeste usurpat sibi, quod Dei est. . . . *Divinatio ergo non dicitur, si quis praenuntiet ea, quae ex necessitate eveniunt vel ut in pluribus, quae humana ratione praenosci possunt, neque etiam si quis futura alia contingentia Deo revelante cognoscat; tunc enim non ipse divinat, id est, quod divinum est, facit, sed magis, quod divinum est, suscipit. Tunc autem solum dicitur divinare, quando sibi indebito modo usurpat*

praenuntiationem futurorum eventuum. Hoc autem constat esse peccatum. Unde divinatio semper est peccatum. Et propter hoc Hieronymus dicit (In Mich., l. I, c. 3) quod 'divinatio semper in malam partem accipitur.'"—Cfr. 2a 2ae, qu. 96, art. 3, ad 2; Slater, II, 220 sq. Frequently divination, express as well as tacit, is only a venial sin on account of the ignorance of those who indulge in it, or because they do not entirely believe that the future can be known by such methods and use them in joke or out of curiosity. In this way young people who consult astrologers or palmists are ordinarily excused from grave sin.

* B. C. A. Windle, "Astrology," in the *Cath. World*, N. Y. 1922, Vol. CXVI, No. 691, pp. 76-81; F. O. Wedel, *The Medieval Attitude toward Astrology*. Yale University Press, 1920.

finding the position of the planets at a given moment (for instance, at birth). The child born when Mars was in the ascendant will be of a warlike temperament, and so forth. All the planets, they say, have an influence on human life and must be taken into account. But several planets, *e. g.*, Uranus and Neptune, were unknown when astrology was in flower. Thus all past horoscopes must have been wrong. And yet astrologers have their clients to-day.

Palmistry does not confine itself to the comparative study of hands, which would be harmless, but proceeds to divination from the lines or marks of the palm. Here, again, we are in touch with an ancient superstition of the East. In China palmistry is said to have existed three thousand years before Christ. The gypsies brought it to Europe in the sixteenth century. As the marks on the hand are caused by the mechanical arrangement of the bones and sinews, it is hard to see how people can be led astray by the claims of the palmists, who in some countries are punishable under the law as vagabonds.*

As to *phrenology*, while it is true that the brain is the organ of the mind, we know very little about their mutual relations. Modern medical science condemns phrenology as quackery and tells us that the grey matter on the surface of the brain cannot be mapped out into thirty or forty areas corresponding to mental or moral qualities, such as intellectual acumen, benevolence, veneration, etc. The outer table of the cranial bones does not accurately represent the contour of the brain surface; the thickness of the skull varies in different individuals; in short, the "brain bumps" mean nothing. An expert on the brain sums up the case against phrenology in these words: "Psychology, physiology, and experience alike contribute

* J. Nestler, *Lehrbuch der Chiromantie*, Leipsic, 1922.

to discredit the practical working of phrenology and to show how worthless the so-called diagnoses of character really are." *

c) *Magic* is the pretended art of producing preternatural effects by bringing into play the action of supernatural beings, of departed spirits, or of the occult powers of nature. To this category belong the supposed arts of witches, the use of amulets, magic salves and lotions, talismans, "chain-prayers," etc.

d) Another form of superstition is belief in the efficacy of *occult remedies* and so-called *sympathetic cures* by means of mysterious personal or moral influences, etc.³

We do not, of course, mean to say that the use of so-called secret remedies is always superstitious and therefore forbidden. Nature contains curative powers which Science has not yet fully investigated and cannot explain. The intimate connection existing between the soul and the body gives rise to a personal influence of one man over another which can be utilized for the benefit of the sick. So also the application of prayers and sacramentals for the healing of diseases is not necessarily superstitious. The belief or practice becomes superstitious only when there is a tendency to ape the doings of the Church, or an

* G. E. Smith, *The Old and the New Phrenology*, London, 1924.

³ A. Hartung, *Die Sympathie als*

Heilmittel, 3rd ed., Leipsic 1900; E. M. Zimmer, *Kräutersegen*, 2nd ed., Donauwörth 1902.

attempt to influence the patient by mock ceremonies, etc.

Divination in all its forms is *per se* mortally sinful, because, in the words of Father Slater, "it is a great insult to God to hold intercourse with, and seek aid from, the devil, His bitter enemy," who is invoked either expressly or tacitly whenever men try, by inordinate means, to find out what is secret and hidden.

The same writer pertinently recalls a remark which St. Thomas makes after St. Augustine, and which should always be borne in mind when there is question of the practices with which we are here dealing. It is said that the devil wishes to excite among men a greater curiosity about occult matters, "so that, being implicated in these observances, they may become more curious and get themselves more entangled in the manifold snares of pernicious error."⁴

e) Among the abnormal conditions that invite superstitious practices are *somnambulism*, *magnetic sleep*, and *hypnosis*.⁵

These states generally involve an increase of intellectual acumen on the one hand and a dangerous limitation of will-power on the other. Their nature is not yet sufficiently cleared up, though

⁴ *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 96, art. 2 sq.; Slater, I, 220 sq.

⁵ E. L. Fischer, *Der sogenannte Lebensmagnetismus oder Hypnotismus*, Mayence 1883; L. Haas, *Ueber Hypnotismus und Suggestion*, Augsburg 1894; A. Moll, *Der Hypnotismus*, 3rd ed., Berlin 1895; L. Schütz, *Der Hypnotismus*, Fulda 1897; Th. M. Coconnier, O.P., *L'Hypnotisme Franc.*, 2nd ed., Paris

1898; O. Stoll, *Suggestion und Hypnotismus*, 2nd ed., Leipsic 1903; J. Lapponi, *Ipnatismo e Spiritismo*, 2nd ed., Rome 1906 (Engl. tr. *Hypnotism and Spiritism*, N. Y. 1915); K. Hasert, *Gedankenlesen, Hypnotismus und Spiritismus*, 2nd ed., Graz 1906; A. Forel, *Der Hypnotismus*, 5th ed., Stuttgart 1908; G. v. Doss, *Der Hypnotismus*, Halle 1907.

Science has shown that they need not be traced to supernatural or diabolical causes. Hence it is superstitious and therefore sinful to assume such causes and by means of them to try to obtain supernatural effects, elicit revelations, or pry into the future.

f) HYPNOTISM.—The question has been raised whether it is permissible to put a person into a hypnotic sleep even when no superstition is involved and the danger of abuse is reduced to a minimum. The hypnotic state is a partial sleep of the motor side of the nervous system and of portions of the sensory nerves. While certain of the higher intellectual powers are quite awake, liberty of action is diminished, if not entirely suspended. Granting that no one can be hypnotized against his will, the further question arises whether one may give his consent to be put into this state, which is but another way of asking whether a man is allowed to renounce his will and place it completely under the control of another. There can be no doubt that such an experiment may be justified by an exalted and important purpose, such as scientific research, provided, of course, all danger of abuse is excluded and no injury is to be feared for one's health. The same rule applies to attempts at curing disease by means of *magnetism* and *hypnotic suggestion*, as long as the necessary moral precautions are ob-

served and the danger of abuse is excluded. A conscientious physician, in applying these means, will, in his own interest, if for no other reason, insist upon the presence of reliable witnesses.

It goes without saying that a *priest*, on account of the *seal of confession*, may not allow himself to be hypnotized or magnetized or put into any state in which he loses the full control of his will.

The use of hypnotism or hypnotic suggestion for the purpose of *reforming moral perverts* has not yet been sufficiently explored to enable the moralist to declare it permissible.⁶ Pierre Janet, Fère, Grasset, Binswanger, and other competent writers are sceptic on the subject. It is quite generally admitted that organic diseases cannot be cured by hypnotism, but that its influence extends only to functional diseases of the nervous system. Even these hypnotism does not cure radically, but merely alleviates certain particularly unpleasant symptoms, and that only for a time. It can offer no guarantee against their recurrence. Moreover, its effects upon the nervous system are not entirely devoid of danger. The intellectual dependence of the patient and his suggestibility are apt to be increased. The firmness with which he will resist immoral suggestions depends, as in the dream state, upon the character and self-control exercised when awake. Re-

⁶ A. Forel, *Der Hypnotismus und die suggestive Psychotherapie*, 4th ed., Stuttgart 1902; F. Walter, *Der Aberglaube*, pp. 242 sqq.—A decision of the S. Congr. of the Holy Office, of June 23, 1840, and July 28, 1847, says: "*Remoto omni errore, sortilegio, explicitâ aut implicitâ daemonis invocatione, usus magnetismi, nempe, merus actus adhi-*

bendi media physica aliunde licita, non est moraliter vetitus, dummodo non tendat ad finem illicitum aut quomodolibet pravam. Applicatio autem principiorum et mediorum pure physicorum ad res et effectus vere supernaturales, ut physice explicentur, non est nisi deceptio omnino illicita et haereticalis." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1653),

peated hypnotizing increases the suggestive power of the influence proceeding from the hypnotizer.⁷

g) SPIRITISM.—Closely allied with animal magnetism and hypnotism is Spiritism, which is therefore commonly treated under the same general heading by theologians and in the decisions of the Roman Congregations. Spiritism may be defined as the belief that the living can and do communicate with the spirits of the departed and receive certain information from them. Though Fr. Thurston has recently tried to justify the use of the name *Spiritualism* for this movement, we agree with Dr. Pace that *Spiritism* "should be carefully distinguished from Spiritualism, which is the philosophical doctrine holding, in general, that there is a spiritual order of beings no less real than a material, and, in particular, that the soul of man is a spiritual substance."⁸

a) This is not the place to describe the *phenomena of Spiritism* or to give an account of its history. In some form or other it is as old as the human race.⁹ Modern Spiritism dates from the year 1848, when the Fox family, at Hydesville, N. Y., first began to hear strange "knockings," and then received messages. Catherine and

⁷ See the famous Jesuit review, *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, Vol. LXX (1906), pp. 457 sq.

⁸ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 221.

⁹ W. R. ("Dean") Harris, *Essays in Occultism, Spiritism, and Demonology*, St. Louis, 1919; *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Necromancy," Vol. X, pp. 735 sqq.

Margaret Fox were the first "mediums."¹⁰ Since then the phenomena have multiplied and there are hundreds, nay thousands of mediums in all civilized countries receiving "messages from the other world." Modern Spiritism has passed beyond the limits of a merely popular movement and challenges the attention of scientists, among whom it has brought about serious divisions. For those who denied the existence of a soul distinct from the body it was a foregone conclusion that there could be no communication between the dead and the living. This view derived plausibility from the innumerable cases of fraud which were brought to light upon closer examination of the methods employed and of the mediums themselves.¹¹

β) The phenomena of Spiritism are partly physical and partly psychical. The *physical phenomena* appear as effects produced in physical substances and often occur in connection with external objects. They may be divided into two groups, one of which includes mainly such effects as locomotion, counteraction of gravitation, and percussion, or, in general, the application of a seemingly physical force to objects, while the others embrace phenomena suggesting a more

¹⁰ On Horace Greeley's view of their doings (he knew them well), see H. Thurston, S. J., *A Sober*

Condemnation of Spiritualism, London 1920 (C. T. S. pamphlet).

¹¹ Dr. Pace in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 222.

profound alteration in physical nature or implying the conveyance of intelligence by physical means.¹² The phenomena of the first group consist of movements of inanimate objects, apport, change in weight, levitation, touches and sounds, while the second group includes elongation, ability to touch burning substances, production of inanimate substances, materialization, impressions, spirit-photography, direct spirit messages, spirit voices, etc.

The *psychical phenomena* show a different aspect. They are of the mental order and can be verified only from the accounts of those who claim to have experienced them. *Automatic writing* and *speaking* constitute the main and most interesting phenomena of this group.

γ) That some of the physical as well as psychical phenomena of Spiritism are real, admits of no doubt. Even Dr. Liljencrants, who tries to explain most of them by an appeal to automatic activity, secondary personality, subliminal memory, telepathy, and so forth, acknowledges it to be "possible that in individual cases there has actually been present an influence from a spirit world," and that this element must be diabolical, since "the assumption that God would allow departed human beings, whether in a probationary state or after they have attained their super-

¹² J. Liljencrants, *Spiritism and Religion*, p. 45, New York 1918,

natural end, to cause the phenomena presented by Spiritism, is . . . preposterous.”¹³ That the devil, with the permission of God, can produce such phenomena is a thesis which can be theologically demonstrated. All Catholic theologians who have treated of the subject uphold the view that where a preternatural element is found in Spiritism, it is to be referred to evil spirits and not to departed human souls.¹⁴

8) This unfavorable view is confirmed by the character of the alleged spirit messages and by the fact that such eminent modern Spiritistic writers as Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle herald these messages as a “*New Revelation*,” which contradicts the old in all its vital points. Mr. J. Godfrey Raupert summarizes the content of this “*New Revelation*” from the writings of its principal prophets as follows: The New Revelation claims to be divine and authoritative. It asserts that man has not fallen into sin; that the Incarnation and death of Jesus Christ were in no sense an atonement; that death does not fix man’s destiny, but the undeveloped soul, after being separated from the body, passes into a temporary penal state, which becomes a means of its development and education.¹⁵ These teachings, as the same writer

13 *Op. cit.*, pp. 268 sq.

14 *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

15 *The New Black Magic and the*

Truth about the Ouija-Board, New York 1919, pp. 19 sqq.

points out, are wholly subversive of historical Christianity and therefore must come from some one who is a liar and a deceiver.¹⁶

ε) The evil tendency of modern Spiritism was perceived from the beginning by the Church authorities. As early as June 25, 1840, the Congregation of the Inquisition, having animal magnetism in mind, decreed as follows: "Where all error, sorcery, and invocation of the demon, implicit or explicit, are excluded, the mere use of physical means which are otherwise lawful, is not morally forbidden, provided no unlawful or evil results are intended. But the application of purely physical principles and means to things or effects that are really supernatural, in order to explain these on physical grounds, is unlawful and heretical."¹⁷ This decision was reiterated on July 28, 1847. A further decree, issued on July 30, 1856, after mentioning discourses about religion, evocation of departed spirits, and "other superstitious practices," exhorted the bishops to put forth every effort for the suppression of these abuses, "in order that the flock of the Lord may be protected against the enemy, that the deposit of faith may be safeguarded, and that the faithful may be preserved from moral corruption."¹⁸ On March 30, 1898, the Holy Office condemned

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 24 sq.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Cfr. *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, p. 224.

Spiritistic practices, even when intercourse with the demon was expressly disavowed and communication sought with good spirits only.¹⁹ On April 24, 1917, the same sacred Congregation forbade even passive assistance at Spiritistic séances.²⁰ A little later the question was proposed, whether it was permissible to take part in any Spiritistic communications or manifestations, even of a genuine and reverential nature, either by interrogating "souls" or spirits, or by listening to their answers, or as a simple spectator, tacitly or expressly protesting that one wishes to have nothing to do with malign spirits. The answer was, "*Negative in omnibus.*"²¹

Whether this decree forbids laboratory work with entranced persons, if conducted without reference to spirits of any kind, is doubtful.²²

The basic malice of Spiritism is to be found in its opposition to the virtue of religion. It explicitly attributes to creatures what belongs to God. There is another and secondary objection to Spiritistic practices, and that is that they presuppose explicit or implicit commerce with the devil.²³

h) THE OUIJA BOARD.—This is a simple con-

¹⁹ Liljencrants, *Spiritism and Religion*, p. 280.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 281.

²¹ Text of the decree in the *Ecclesiastical Review*, August, 1917,

p. 186, and in Liljencrants, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

²² Liljencrants, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

²³ J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theologiae Moralis*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 247 sq.

trivance, by means of which messages are obtained that have the appearance of coming from the spirits of the dead. According to Mr. Raupert,²⁴ who is thoroughly familiar with its workings, the ouija board (also called *planchette*), in the beginning, before the mind of the experimenter has attained any great degree of passivity, gives out messages which are wholly normal and drawn from the slightly awakened subconscious mind. Sometimes the messages appear to come from an independent personality, such as the spirit of a deceased friend or relative. But so long as the statements made contain no matter foreign to the mind of the experimenter, and no answer to a question that might not have been projected from the subconscious storehouse of his own mind, there is no valid reason for assuming the presence of an outside intelligence. In proportion, however, as the mind becomes more passive and lethargic, the phenomenon begins to change its character, and imperceptibly passes from the natural into the preternatural. Here and there a message is jerked in, which is startling and seen at once not to be a part of the experimenter's mental outfit. Events happening at a distance are accurately reported and commented upon, disclosures are made respecting the character and doings and intimate personal af-

²⁴ *The New Black Magic*, pp. 207 to 234.

fairs of persons not known to the experimenter. Messages are given, clearly and conclusively indicating knowledge and information beyond the reach of the writer's own mind, and they are conveyed in a form and manner suggesting the presence of a critical and observant mind and of a judgment quite at variance with that of the experimenter. When further questions are asked, the answer generally is that the spirit of some departed friend or relative is present, that he has discovered this simple means of communication, and is eager to cultivate intercourse with the living for the benefit of the experimenter and of the human race at large.

The experimenter, fascinated by these communications, and convinced that he has come upon a great and valuable discovery, readily adopts the advice given and resorts to the ouija board habitually and systematically.

When trust and confidence have been secured, the spirit will slowly begin to undermine the Christian belief of the experimenter, deny the divinity of Christ, the authority of conscience, and the reality of the judgment to come. It will feed the mind with empty platitudes, very acceptable to the natural man, but ultimately in contradiction with the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.

Perhaps the most conclusive proof that the

spirits communicating through the ouija board are evil is to be found in the physical, moral, and mental effects which the practice has upon the experimenter. Mr. Raupert sums up the testimony of many scientific students of the subject in a series of paragraphs of which the following is the gist: Persons habitually and systematically using the ouija board, or planchette, or similar automatic devices for obtaining spirit messages, after a time experience a peculiar condition of lassitude and exhaustion, often accompanied by severe pain at the top of the spine and gradually spreading over the entire brain. This state of prostration is attributable to the fact that in order to obtain the movements of the board, vital or nerve energy is withdrawn from the organism of the experimenter, often out of all proportion to his or her physical health and constitution. In professional mediums, who practice their power incessantly and for pecuniary gain, this prostration is apt to be so great that they become complete nervous wrecks after a time. The inexperienced experimenter scarcely ever attributes this condition to the true cause, and it is difficult to convince him that a practice seemingly so harmless, could be attended by such bad effects. If the experiments are continued, the general health begins to fail, there manifests itself a kind of apathy and weariness which unfits the person

for the ordinary duties of life, deprives him of all interest in them, and is only relieved by the ouija board. Communication with the "friends" in the unseen world now becomes the one exciting and all-absorbing interest and occupation to which all other duties and interests are subordinated. In proportion as physical vigor, and with it the power of resistance, decline and passivity and apathy increase, the "spirit" gains closer access to the mind, directs and influences its operations, and, in course of time, obtains complete control of it. The mind becomes more and more susceptible to suggestion and less and less able to discriminate and resist. The messages come with greater regularity, but their moral tone declines. They become distinctly immoral and mischievous in aim and character. The Christian law is ridiculed and Christian customs and practices are declared to be old-fashioned and out of date. As the "psychic development" advances, the entire mental and moral nature of the experimenter becomes disordered, and he discovers to his cost that, whilst it was an easy thing for him to open the mental door by which the mind could be invaded, it is difficult if not impossible to expel the invader and shut that door. The final result is a pitiable condition of mental and moral collapse, which often terminates in suicide or insanity.

Mr. Raupert merely echoes the warning of such truly scientific and thoroughly well informed scholars as Dr. Mercier in London, Dr. Viollet in France, and the late Dr. Laponi in Italy, when he cautions against these practices as dangerous to mental and moral health.²⁵

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 233.—Father Hubert Gruender, S.J., the well-known psychologist, author of *An Introductory Course in Experimental Psychology* (Chicago, 1920), explains the first stages of the workings of the ouija board as follows in an article contributed to *The Queen's Work*, St. Louis, Mo., August, 1920, Vol. XII, No. 8, pp. 198 sqq.: "In the first stage the person handling the ouija board has no intention to spell out a definite answer to a given question, but he expects a definite answer or he is afraid that a certain answer will be given. In other words, the writing is involuntary but conscious. Under these conditions the heart-shaped table or planchette on the ouija board moves apparently of itself and pulls the hand along. As a matter of fact, however, the hand really pushes the planchette, and invariably in the direction of those letters or signs which are in accord with the expectations or fears of the operator. Involuntary movements of this kind are due to what may be appropriately called the 'motor power' of images. What is meant by the phrase is simply: When we imagine a familiar movement of our body—that is, if we recall how such a movement feels, or how it looks, or how it sounds, these images tend to produce the movement itself. I say they *tend* to do so; for by an act of the will we can inhibit the gross movement. But the initial move-

ment—the first beginnings of the movement—will occur in spite of ourselves. These initial movements are so slight that they cannot be detected by an ordinary observer. Under laboratory conditions, however, they can be detected with precision. . . . When persons have become accustomed to the use of the ouija board they develop gradually another form of automatic writing. They write not only involuntarily but unconsciously, or, more correctly, subconsciously. In other words, persons in an advanced stage of passivity and mental lethargy communicate by means of the ouija board thoughts which exist only in the subconscious background of their minds and which they could not communicate under normal conditions. . . . There are always a foreground and a background in our conscious experience." The thousand objects of sense which we see, hear, and feel without being aware of the fact (as the ticking of a clock while we are reading or conversing) "are lost to us as far as our normal conscious experience is concerned," but "they are not entirely lost. They make an impression on our brain. However faint the traces may be which such impressions leave on the brain, the record is there. And under favorable conditions these experiences can be brought to light again just as truly as a phonographic record can be

i) The rarer phenomena of *clairvoyance*, by which scenes and events passing at a great distance are seen, or by which an ignorant medium shows knowledge not possessed in the normal state, is by most theologians attributed to preternatural causes. "It seems impossible," says Fr. Slater, "that natural forces should be able to produce effects altogether beyond their range."²⁶

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 92-93; 95-96.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 1-11; 14-28.—H. Th. Simar, *Der Aberglaube*, 2nd ed., Cologne 1879.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 608 sqq., Freiburg 1881.—F. Walter, *Aberglaube und Seelsorge*, Paderborn 1905.—W. Fischer, *Der Aberglaube aller Zeiten*, Paderborn 1906.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, 9th ed., pp. 235 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 11th ed., pp. 164 sqq.

ON ORDEALS: F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, p. 516.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, I, p. 292.—J. P. Kirsch, art. "Ordeals" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, pp. 276 sqq.—A. Franz, *Die kirchl. Benediktionen im Mittelalter*, Freiburg i. B.,

used to reproduce the musical sounds which made the record. It is particularly under abnormal conditions that such subconscious experiences are revealed. . . . In the case of the second form of ouija-board writing . . . there is a brain record of experiences which never reached the focus of attention; there is the abnormal lethargic condition of the operator of the ouija board, made habitual by long continued dabbling in the mysterious; there is the motor power of images; the neural current discharges into the motor tracts, which lead in the first case to the muscles of the vocal organs, and in the other case to the muscles of arm and hand. . . . Sometimes for persons in this stage of

ouija-board writing the images of the words to be spelled out become so vivid as to amount to real hallucinations. Such persons then hear voices. What they write is dictated to them by some mysterious agency. They experience an irresistible impulse to write, and then the ouija board works overtime. When it comes to this, such persons are ripe—or will soon be ripe—for the insane asylum. And this is another danger connected with operating the ouija board. Many of its victims do actually end in the insane asylum."—See also H. Carrington, *The Problems of Psychical Research*, N. Y., 1921, pp. 247 sqq.

²⁶ *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 223.

Vol. II, pp. 307 sqq.—Vacandard, *Études de Critique et d'Histoire Religieuse*, Paris 1905, pp. 19 sqq.—Patteta, *Le Ordalie*, Turin 1890.

On DIVINATION: H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 166 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 237 sqq.—E. P. Graham, art. "Divination" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, pp. 48 sqq.—F. A. Göpfert, *Moraltheologie*, Vol. I, pp. 507 sqq.—E. Müller, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 242 sqq.

On MAGIC: Suarez, *De Religione*, l. II, c. 14.—P. Laymann, *Theol. Mor.*, l. IV, tr. 10, c. 4.—J. von Görres, *Die christliche Mystik*, Ratisbon 1842, Vol. IV, 9th book.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 177 sqq.—J. Diefenbach, *Der Hexenwahn*, Mayence 1886.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 239 sq.—J. P. Arendzen, art. "Occult Arts" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, pp. 197 sqq.—Andrew Lang, *Magic and Religion*, London 1910.—Habert, *La Magie*, Paris 1908.—Kiesewetter, *Geschichte des neueren Okkultismus*, Leipsic 1891.—Thorndyke, *The Place of Magic in the Intellectual History of Europe*, New York 1905.

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mus und das Christentum, Ratisbon 1881.—C. Gutberlet, *Der Spiritismus*, Cologne 1882.—IDEM, *Der Kampf um die Seele*, 2nd ed., Mayence 1903, pp. 498 sqq.—W. Schneider, *Der neuere Geisterglaube*, 2nd ed., Paderborn 1895.—J. Dippel, *Der neuere Spiritismus*, Munich 1897.—E. Meric, *L'Autre Vie*, 14th ed., Paris 1920.—F. Walter, *Der Aberglaube*, pp. 301 sqq.—G. Dumesnil, *Le Spiritualisme*, Paris 1905.—E. Meric, *L'Imagination et les Prodiges*, Paris 1906.—A. R. Wallace, *Miracles and Modern Spiritism*, London 1897.—G. Surbled, *Spiritualisme et Spiritisme*, Paris 1898.—IDEM, *Spirites et Médiums*, Paris 1901.—Bennett, *Spiritualism*, New York 1907.—H. Carrington, *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritism*, Boston 1907.—A. Ph. F. von Schrenck-Notzing, *Materialisationsphänomene: Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der mediumistischen Teleplastie*, Munich 1914 (English by E. E. Fournier D'Abbe, under the title, *The Phenomena of Materialization: A Contribution to the Investigation of Mediumistic Phenomena*, London 1920).—W. Whately Smith, *The Foundations of Spiritualism*, London 1920.—Hudson Tuttle, *Arcana of Spiritualism: A Manual of Spiritual Science and Philosophy*, Manchester 1900.—F. Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism*, 2 vols., London 1902.—IDEM, *The Newer Spiritualism*, London 1910.—E. A. Pace, art. "Spiritism" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 221. sqq.—J. G. Raupert, *Modern Spiritism*, St. Louis 1912.—IDEM, *Dangers of Spiritualism*, London 1914.—IDEM, *The New Black Magic*, New York 1919.—J. Liljencrants, *Spiritism and Religion*, New York 1918.—Elliott O'Donnell, *The Menace of Spiritualism*, London 1920.—W. R. ("Dean") Harris, *Essays in Spiritism, Occultism, and Demonology*, St. Louis 1918.—Jos. Sasia, S.J., *A Safe View of Spiritism for Catholics*, San Francisco 1920.—T. J. Hardy (Anglican), *Spiritism in the Light of Faith*, London 1920 (to be used with caution on account of its bias against the Catholic Church).—A. M. Lepicier, O.S.M., *The Unseen World: An Exposition of Catholic Theology in its Relation to Modern Spiritism*, 2nd ed., London 1909.—J. Antonelli, *Medicina Pastoralis*, Vol. II, 4th ed., Rome 1920, pp. 1 sqq.—A. T. Schofield, *Modern Spiritism*, Philadelphia 1920.—Hereward Carrington, *The Problems of Psychical Research*, N. Y. 1921.

SECTION 3

SUPERSTITION IN THE PRETERNATURAL ORDER

Superstition in the preternatural order, which we have to some extent already anticipated in the last Article, is of a twofold kind, according as it concerns man's relation to the demons or to the souls of his departed fellowmen.

I. SUPERSTITION IN REGARD TO MAN'S RELATION TO THE DEMONS.—a) Undoubtedly this form of superstition draws sustenance from the theological belief in the existence of demons, from the possibility and reality of their influence upon mankind, and from the deep-seated conviction existing in the minds of men that evil spirits exercise extraordinary power. Nevertheless it is not true to say that this kind of superstition is a by-product of Christian angelology; rather is it an unconquered relic of paganism,¹ and consequently, like superstition itself, much older than the Christian Church. Wherever Christianity has not yet penetrated, this particular kind of superstition takes the form of a distortion of Catholic teaching. For this reason it is a

¹ Cfr. Döllinger, *Heidentum und Judentum*, pp. 181 sqq., 617 sqq.

mistake to try to eradicate it by simply denying the existence of the devil and his kingdom. Only by propagating the undiluted truth concerning Satan and his work can this spiritual malady be overcome.

The Catholic Church teaches: (1) that the evil spirits, like the angels, are entirely subject to God and can do nothing without His concurrence and permission; (2) that they can work no miracles, but by means of their superior insight and of a certain control over the powers of nature, are able to produce what seem to us extraordinary phenomena; (3) that they are, by themselves, incapable of producing any good effects, but, on the contrary, habitually practice falsehood and deception.²

From these truths it follows that it is superstitious and foolish to attribute exaggerated power to the evil spirits, to ascribe extraordinary happenings to them too readily, to invoke their help in order to injure others, and, in general, to attempt with the aid of the devil and his fallen angels to do things which transcend the order of nature.

b) The principal forms of this species of superstition are sorcery and witchcraft. These and other practices, by which disproportionate means are employed to procure a certain effect,

² St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a, qu. 114; *Cat. Rom.*, P. IV, c. 15, qu. 8.

are embraced by theologians in the technical term *vana observantia*.

a) *Sorcery*, in the broad sense (also called *natural*, *artificial*, or *white magic*), is defined as the art of working apparent wonders by the help of natural causes. In a stricter and more limited sense sorcery means the art of producing effects which, though not supernatural, exceed the powers of man and, consequently, can be wrought only by the help of the devil, explicitly or implicitly invoked for that purpose.³

There is only an accidental difference between these kinds of superstition and *divination*; for while divination uses disproportionate means to discover, by the help of the devil, what is hidden, witchcraft and magic employ disproportionate means to obtain certain and wonderful effects by the same agency. Morally, therefore, the two practices are equally reprehensible.

β) *Witchcraft*, like divination, may imply an express or a tacit compact with the devil. If the compact is express, it always involves mortal sin. If it is merely tacit, ignorance, good faith, or lack of confidence in the effect will frequently be a cause of leniency. Moreover, there must be ad-

³ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 264: "Magia late sumpta seu magia naturalis vel artificialis, quae magia alba vocatur, est ars mira faciendi, saltem apparenter, per causas naturales aut hominis industriam abs-

que ullo daemonis ministerio. Magia stricte dicta est ars mira faciendi, quae licet non supernaturalia sint, vires tamen hominis superant et proinde ope solius daemonis explicite vel implicate invocati fieri possunt."

vertence to the total inadequacy of the means to produce the desired effect, and to the danger of diabolic intervention, otherwise there will be no sin of superstition.⁴

Belief in malevolent witchcraft (*maleficium*) is based upon the idea that certain persons, especially of the female sex, in virtue of a formal compact with the devil, command diabolical powers, by means of which they can produce preternatural effects for the purpose of injuring their fellow-creatures.⁵

Though the possibility of a mystic union between man and Satan is admitted by Catholics, the epidemic occurrence of witchcraft and the persecution of alleged witches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not traceable to this theoretical belief, but finds its explanation, partly

⁴ Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 221 sq.

⁵ Gury, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, I, n. 264: "*Magia late sumpta seu magia daemonis interventu duplex distinguitur, scil. amatorium et veneficum. Maleficium amatorium seu philtrum est ars diabolica, quâ lubricus amor vel odium in aliqua persona erga aliam vehementer excitatur. Maleficium veneficum est praeclise ars nocendi proximo variis modis ope daemonis, v. g. morbis, hebetudine, etc. Maleficium vulgo vocatur sortilegium, ex eo, quod per illud sors mala iniciatur iis, contra quos vindicta operatione diabolicâ exercetur. Hinc in iure canonico et in historia ecclesiastica magi et sagae sortiarum et sortiarum vocantur.*"—*Ibid.*, n. 265: "*Magia non differt a vana observantia nisi in eo,*

quod eius effectus sint magis miri, v. g. immutatio corporum, etc. Non autem differt specie morali nec a vana observantia nec a divinatione, quia parvi refert, utrum a daemone occultorum notitia aut effectus mirandi petantur. Maleficium autem differt specie ab aliis superstitionibus ex eo, quod praeter peccatum religioni oppositum, damnum proximo inducat. Maleficium amatorium non inducit necessario ad patrandum luxuriae peccatum; non enim tollit libertatem, sed tantum vehementer ad libidinem excitat erga aliquam personam determinatam phantasiam immutando et vividius excitando, pulchriores species exhibendo, humores libidinosos commovendo."—Cfr. A. Stöckl, *Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, Vol. III, pp. 424 sq., 450 sqq.

at least, in the religious, political, and social conditions of the time, in the introduction of narcotics and alcoholic liquors, and in the low state of theology and the natural sciences.⁶ We say, "partly at least," because from the Catholic point of view there can be no doubt that the devil has a hand in exploiting the superstitions and prejudices of men.

"The possibility of human intercourse with Satan," says Pohle, "cannot be denied in view of the many instances recorded, or assumed as true, in the New Testament. The medieval witch-baiters sinned grievously by exaggerating the power of the devil, by neglecting the most elementary principles of sound psychology, and by proceeding with unpardonable carelessness and inhuman cruelty in the trial of persons accused of witchcraft. No period of the world's history is characterized by so many insane superstitions and such a radical want of common sense as the terrible time during which thousands of supposed witches were tried, tortured, and executed for practicing sorcery."⁷ Of course, the theological principle that there are demons, and that they have power to injure men in body and soul, is no more disproved by these medieval excesses than by the all too ready credence which in our own time thousands of well-meaning Catholics gave to the bogus revelations of Leo Taxil and his fictitious Diana Vaughan."⁸

It is pleasing to remember that the principal opponent of witchcraft was a Catholic and a Jesuit, the renowned Friedrich von Spee. He was born at Kaiserwerth on the Rhine, Feb. 25, 1591, and died at Treves, Aug. 7, 1635.

⁶ See the works on witchcraft cited in the bibliography *infra*, p. 303.

⁷ See J. Janssen, *Geschichte des Deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgang*

des Mittelalters, Vol. VIII (English tr. by A. M. Christie, Vol. XVI).

⁸ Pohle-Preuss, *God the Author of Nature and the Supernatural*, 3rd ed., St. Louis 1919, pp. 348 sq.

His famous "*Cautio Criminalis*," written in elegant Latin, is a powerful arraignment, based upon the author's own awful experiences, of trial for witchcraft. The book was printed anonymously in 1631, although Spee was undoubtedly known to many as its author. He describes in thrilling language and with cutting sarcasm the horrible abuses in the prevailing legal proceedings, particularly the inhuman use of the rack, and demands measures of reform. Several generations passed before the persecution of witches ceased in Germany, the classic land of these outrages, but the "*Cautio Criminalis*" finally brought about its abolition in Mayence and a number of other places and led the way to its general suppression.⁹ Christian Thomasius (+ 1728), the leading opponent of witchcraft among the legal profession, confesses that it was the Jesuit theologian, Spee, who turned him against the inhuman practice of persecuting women as witches. The abuse was strongly defended by the famous jurist Benedict Carpzov (+ 1666), whose teaching was endorsed as late as twenty years after the death of Thomasius by the Protestant jurist Bechmann,¹⁰ of Saxony. Bechmann advocated the burning of "witches" even when no damage could be proved, and does not even mention Spee and Thomasius. In view of these facts it is unjust to blame the theologians for the survival of this barbarous superstition.¹¹

The Bull "*Summis desiderantes affectibus*," of Pope Innocent VIII is not, as many older writers have asserted, responsible for the witch mania of the two succeeding

⁹ H. Cardauns in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 213 sq.; B. Diel and B. Duhr, S.J., *Friedrich Spee*, Freiburg 1901.

¹⁰ *Discursus Iuridicus de Crimine Maleficii*, Halle 1749.

¹¹ Cfr. B. Duhr, S.J., "*Zur Biographie des P. Friedrich Spee*," in the *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 1905, pp. 327 sqq.

centuries. Innocent may have personally believed in the actual existence of illicit intercourse between evil spirits and human beings; but he does not say so in his Bull. What he says is that he had heard such evil practices charged against witches in Germany; for example, intercourse with *incubi* and *succubi*.¹² To judge his attitude correctly, we must consider that, in the words of Fr. Thurston, S.J., "not only had an active campaign against most forms of sorcery already been going on for a long period [before the publication of the Bull "*Summis desiderantes affectibus*"] but in the matter of procedure, of punishments, of judges, etc., Innocent enacted nothing new. The direct purport of his Bull was simply to ratify the powers already conferred upon Henry Institoris and James Sprenger, inquisitors, to deal with persons of every class and with every form of crime (for example, with witchcraft as well as heresy), and it called upon the Bishop of Strasburg to lend the inquisitors all possible support."¹³

γ) It may be advisable to add a few words on the so-called *magic wand* or *divining rod*, a forked twig, generally of witch-hazel or witch-elm, used to discover springs of water, mineral deposits, oil wells, etc. The rod is held by the tips, and the larger end is supposed to bend toward the earth when the spring or deposit is reached. The divining rod is sometimes used also to find lost articles and to detect criminals. This latter use is clearly illicit be-

¹² "*Sane nuper ad nostrum, non sine ingenti molestiâ, pervenit auditum, quod in nonnullis partibus Allemannie superioris . . . complures utriusque sexus personae, propriae salutis immemores et a fide catholica deviantes, cum daemonibus incubis et succubis abuti . . .*" (Bull, "*Summis desiderantes affectibus*," 1484).—On *incubi* and *succubi*

cfr. St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, I. XV, c. 23; St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a, qu. 51, art. 3, ad 6; St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, I. III, n. 475 (ed. Gaudé, I, 697); J. Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition and Hexenprozess*, pp. 25. sqq., 185 sqq., Leipsic 1900.

¹³ *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, p. 676.

cause superstitious. To employ the rod for discovering water, oil, or mineral deposits is permissible only if all superstitious beliefs are excluded. There can scarcely be a doubt that the divining rod in the hands of some persons aids in the discovery of water, oil, and minerals. The reason for this has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Fr. Slater thinks that "particular individuals may be very sensitive to the presence of water or minerals, even when hidden under the surface of the earth," and that a power of detecting the presence of underground water from the vegetation or other surface indications may be developed.¹⁴

¹⁴ *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 220. Noldin says (*Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, *p. 172): "*Vix errabit, qui motum virgae in manu determinatae cuiusdam personae collocatae tribuat viribus naturalibus magneticis vel electricis, quae tum in corpore quarundarum personarum, tum in ramis quarundarum arborum (e.g., persicae), tum in certis corporibus (aqua, metalla) copiosius continentur, dummodo independenter ab intentione eius, qui virgam adhibet, solum versus certa corpora (aqua, metalla) et versus haec corpora semper aequali modo moveatur.*"—A correspondent of the *Scientific American* (Vol. 108, No. 15) recently suggested an explanation of the *modus operandi* of the divining rod which was favorably received by a number of journals (*cfr.* the *Catholic Fortnightly Review*, Vol. XX, No. 9). It may be termed the theory of mental expectancy. The whole secret, this writer thinks, "is in the way the rod is held. Get a forked stick, with each limb about fifteen inches long, and small enough, so as to bend easily. Take a firm hold of both limbs, one in each hand, with the palm up, so the

limbs will enter the hand under the little finger and go out under the thumb. Now begin to explore for water. My first experiment was to walk over a water pipe about six feet under ground. Just as I passed the pipe, the end of the stick rose in the air, came over toward me, and pointed down and back in the direction of the running water, but the pull was too strong to be accounted for by any action of the water. The rough knots would have cut the skin of my hand if I had not loosened my grip. I crossed the pipe repeatedly, always with the same result, until I tried it with my eyes closed, so as not to know when I passed the pipe. In this case it failed to work at all. I also found that when the stick is held in any other way, it will never move. Held in the way directed, the muscles of the hands and arms are in a strained position, and the limbs are bent outward, so that a very slight movement of the ends of the limbs will cause the end of the stick to move a long distance in either direction." In the opinion of this writer the natural efforts of the muscles to relieve the strain, and

The use of the divining rod in the belief that a stick of a particular shape, cut from a particular kind of tree or bush, will point out hidden treasures, or mines, or springs of water, is superstitious and sinful for the reason that "there is no natural force which acts in the arbitrary manner in which the divining rod is said to act under the circumstances."¹⁵

2. SUPERSTITION IN REGARD TO MAN'S RELATION TO THE SOULS OF THE DEPARTED.—This species of superstition owes its existence to a perversion of the Catholic dogma of purgatory and of the revealed teaching that the living can aid the souls of the dead by prayer and sacrifice. It was an ancient belief that the souls of departed criminals were confined to the place where the crime was committed, or compelled to watch over the treasure they had unjustly obtained, and that these souls could be cited and forced to give up their hidden riches by the use of magic formulas and the performance of certain acts which atoned for their crimes. To this class of superstitions belong, *e. g.*, the so-called sacrifices for the dead, the invocation of spirits, digging for treasure, etc. They are one

the automatic action of the mind, account for the working of the divining rod. This theory is not quite satisfactory, but so much is certain that the effect of the *virga divinatoria* is nowadays commonly explained by natural powers and therefore St. Alphonsus' condemnation of its use is no longer sus-

tained by moralists. (Cfr. Ad. Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. II, Tournai 1905, p. 522; *Revue du Monde Invisible*, Paris, Oct. 15, 1898; Surbled, "*Le Secret des Sorciers*" in the *Science Catholique*, Paris, Sept. 1902).

¹⁵ Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, I, 218 sq.

and all sinful, first, because they are opposed to the truth that God's vindictive justice works itself out fully, not in this world, but in the next,¹⁶ and, secondly, because they evince an unwholesome desire for unearned wealth.

On Spiritism proper, see *supra*, pp. 280 sqq.

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 96.—IDEM, *Summa contra Gent.*, 1. III, c. 103–108.—F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 355 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 622 sqq.—F. Walter, *Der Aberglaube*, pp. 265 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, 171 sqq.

On WITCHCRAFT in particular: J. Diefenbach, *Der Hexenwahn*, Mayence 1886; IDEM, *Der Zauberglaube des 16ten Jahrhunderts*, Mayence 1900; S. Reizler, *Besessenheit, Zauberei und Hexenfabeln*, Francfort 1893; B. Duhr, S.J., *Die Stellung der Jesuiten in den deutschen Hexenprozessen*, Cologne 1900; B. J. Diel and B. Duhr, S.J., *Friedrich Spe*, Freiburg 1901; J. Hansen, *Zauberwahn, Inquisition und Hexenprozess*, Munich and Leipsic 1900; H. L. Strack, *Das Blut im Glauben und Aberglauben der Menschheit*, 7th ed., Munich 1900; F. Frank, *Der Ritualmord*, Ratisbon 1901; IDEM, *Nachträge zu "Der Ritualmord"* etc., Ratisbon 1902; K. Mommert, *Der Ritualmord bei den Talmud-Juden*, Leipsic 1905; B. Duhr, S.J., *Jesuiten-Fabeln*, 4th ed., pp. 342, 488, 879; K. Binz, *Dr. Joh. Weyer, Der erste Bekämpfer des Hexenwahns*, 2nd ed., Berlin 1896; W. H. Roscher, *Ephialtes*, Leipsic 1900; L. Günther, *Ein Hexenprozess*, Giessen 1906; O. Syell, *Hexenprozesse und Geistesstörung*, Munich 1891; H. Thurston, S.J., art. "Witchcraft," in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, pp. 674–677; J. Janssen, *History of the German People* (English tr., Vol. XVI); Kittredge, *Notes on Witchcraft*, Worcester, Mass., 1907. (For additional bibliographical data see Thurston, *l. c.*)

¹⁶ Cfr. John III, 17.

SECTION 4

SUPERSTITION IN THE SUPERNATURAL ORDER

In regard to the strictly supernatural order there are two additional forms of superstition, namely, superstitious Naturalism and exaggerated Mysticism.

I. SUPERSTITIOUS NATURALISM.—The Church teaches that grace is ordinarily (*modo ordinario*) communicated to men by means of external signs, *i. e.*, Sacraments, sacramentals, and prayer. This truth is distorted by those who believe that these divinely appointed means of grace produce their effect by magic, and especially that, under certain definite conditions or external circumstances, this effect is absolutely certain; for instance, that a definite number of masses said for some poor soul will infallibly release that soul from purgatory, or that a determined number of Pater nosters recited in a certain place or at a certain time will surely procure the desired favor, or that the intercession of the Saints will follow upon the recitation of certain prayers or is assured by invoking them in some particular place. Thus the grace of God is, as it were, materialized.

The superstition consists in the wrong belief that certain prayers or formulas operate infallibly, that some masses are of greater value than others, or that a definite number of them, said in a particular place, possess a special power, etc.¹

One curious form of superstitious Naturalism which has become very popular of late years is *faith-healing*, especially in the shape of "*Christian Science*." Christian Science does not owe its alleged successes to prayer, because its foundress, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, expressly rejected the dogma of the efficacy of intercessory prayer. This deluded woman and her followers deny the existence of disease and reject all the knowledge of curative agencies which the human race has accumulated in the course of many generations. They exclude physicians from the sick-room, deny that drugs have any power to heal, and reject, those that are consistent, opiates and anesthetics, the greatest boon medical science has conferred on man. Their anodyne for the agony that finds expression in the heart-rending cry of the sick is the formula: "There is no disease," "Pain is imaginary," "Think of God not as a person, but as a principle," "Get rid of this nonsense

1 P. Laymann, *Theol. Mor.*, 7th ed., l. IV, tr. 10, c. 4, n. 4: "*Nam licet Deus quibusdam confert gratiam sanitatum, quae inter gratias datas numeratur, tamen ita confert, ut sit gratia personalis et non infallibiliter annexa certae rei aut actioni, quam*

quavis hominum adhibere et effectum miraculosum praestare possit."—Cfr. K. Eberle, *Der Tricenarius des hl. Gregorius*, Ratisbon 1890; A. Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter*, Freiburg 1902, pp. 87 sqq., 244 sqq.

about being sick, and you will be as well as anybody." The Christian Scientists and other "faith healers" reject the things which God has endued with healing power and which even the brute beasts instinctively seek when ill. Their exaggerated trust in "faith" is a superstition that is apt to entail very dangerous consequences.² Aside from its unreasonableness and heretical tendency, faith-healing is sinful because it is apt to produce an effeminate type of character which shrinks from pain and concentrates attention upon itself. It sets up false grounds for determining whether a person is or is not in the favor of God. It opens the door to many superstitious practices, such as attaching undue importance to dreams and signs, opening the Bible at random, expecting the Lord so to influence the thoughts and minds of men that they can gather His will from the first Bible text their eyes accidentally fall upon; impressions, "assurances," etc. By violating reason this superstition often leads to mental derangement.³

Of all delusions in the matter of religion, which have ever gained support among apparently intelligent people, "Christian Science" is perhaps the most surprising. It has been justly remarked that this system is "neither Christian

² J. M. Buckley, *Christian Science and Other Superstitions*, p. 45, New York 1899.

³ G. M. Searle, C. S. P., *The Truth About Christian Science*, New York 1916, p. VII.

nor science.” For, as Father George M. Searle, C.S.P., points out, in what is probably the best refutation of this modern heresy, “a doctrine professing to be Christian should (as is evident) be one founded on the words of Christ as a whole, which the person holding such a doctrine endeavors to explain in their genuine sense, rather than on theories which he himself has elaborated, and supports, here and there, by such words of Christ as he can manage to fit to suit his purpose. Also, a system professing to be scientific should rest on a solid basis of fact, and be stated clearly and distinctly, not in vague generalities, which are either truisms or have no precise meaning whatever. A scientific system should in some way be a contribution to our knowledge. But the most favorable criticism on the lucubration known as ‘Christian Science’ would be that it contains ‘some things which are new, and some things which are true; but the things which are true are not new, and the things which are new are not true.’ ”

Despite its absurdity, “Christian Science” is a dangerous and soul-destroying error, which has deceived and is deceiving thousands of well-meaning persons. It strikes at the very root and foundation of all the Christian virtues, and substitutes for humility an overweening pride, which calls it a delusion to think that we are not as just and as good as God Himself. It is dangerous

also for the reason that it has, superficially, a specious appearance of good and presents in its poor dupes a fair-seeming counterfeit of the joy and peace which Christ promised to give to His true followers.⁴

Father Noldin gives the following criteria for distinguishing superstitious practices from the scriptural "*grace of healing*," of which St. Paul speaks in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (xii, 9), and which it is reasonable to believe that God even now occasionally bestows upon saints and other individuals for the common welfare. We should inquire, he says, (1) Whether the healer is the only one who is able to produce the effect in question, or whether it can be produced by others with the same means, and whether he has learned his art from others; (2) Whether the means employed are silly and inappropriate; because if God makes a cure dependent upon external signs, as He sometimes does, these signs will never be silly or inept; (3) Whether the healer believes that his power of curing disease inheres in the words or signs employed, because God gives the grace of healing to persons and does not attach it to external signs.⁵

Those who go about healing diseases in man or beast should be subjected to the following tests:

a) Inquiry should be made whether the means or remedies employed produce their effect by virtue of their natural power. If this can be affirmed with any degree of probability, their use may be permitted, but protestation should be made against the possible influence of the devil.

b) If the effect produced can by no probable conjecture be ascribed to the powers of nature, the whole thing need

⁴ 1 Cor. XII, 9.—Searle, *ibid.*, p. 289.

⁵ See note 1, *supra*.

not be rejected *a priori* as superstitious and illicit, but a careful examination of each case should be made with all its attending circumstances.

c) If this examination shows that the method employed is not positively superstitious, if the prayers and invocations used by the healer contain nothing wrong or inept, and if the healer himself is in good faith and does not attribute infallible efficacy either to the remedies he prescribes or to the formulas he employs, it will not be necessary to forbid the practice, though it is always prudent to advise those who submit to such ministrations that they should make a formal intention of rejecting any and all effects that might possibly be produced by the intervention of the evil one.⁶

2. SUPERSTITIOUS MYSTICISM.—The Church teaches, and history attests, that the religious life in its higher (mystic) stages is characterized by extraordinary signs or states, such as visions, ecstasies, raptures, stigmata, mystic espousals, miracles, revelations, and prophecies.⁷ This truly Christian belief becomes superstitious when purely natural phenomena, or phenomena produced by diabolic power, are proclaimed to be miraculous effects of divine grace, or when apparent or fictitious miracles or revelations are incautiously and credulously accepted as genuine. The Church, to prevent such aberrations, im-

⁶ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 176 sq.

⁷ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 171-178; E. Amort, *De Revelationibus, Visionibus et Apparitionibus Privatis Regulae Tutae*,

August. Vindel., 1744; J. v. Bonniot, *Wunder und Scheinwunder*, Mayence 1889; J. H. Newman, *Two Essays on Biblical and Ecclesiastical Miracles*, new impression, London 1911.

poses upon her children the strict duty of exercising reserve and caution when confronted with such dubious phenomena, that is, not to form an opinion on them according to their own subjective notions, but to be guided by the judgment of the legitimate ecclesiastical authority. The reason is because, even in extraordinary states or phenomena of genuine mysticism, the personal element is always very pronounced, and it is therefore difficult to distinguish purely natural or diabolical from supernatural effects. In such cases the following rules will be found helpful:

a) All phenomena and statements which run counter to the faith, to sound piety, or to approved Catholic custom, or which in form or substance contain anything equivocal, unbecoming, or ludicrous, are undeserving of belief because the circumstances of the case absolutely exclude supernatural revelation.

b) Persons whose behavior does not fully conform to the strict requirements of Christian morality, or who are physically or mentally abnormal, or obviously eager to create a sensation or to derive some advantage from their condition, or claim special consideration or favors on account of it, or are extremely sensitive to criticism or to doubts expressed by others in their good faith or honesty, or who proudly raise themselves above and criticize others, nay, attempt to reform

the Church itself, must be suspected of simulation or fraud.

c) Even when the phenomena are undoubtedly genuine and there is evidence of a divine revelation, not everything is to be accepted as equally supernatural, because every private revelation is dependent more or less on the subjective views and the individuality of the medium, and it is easy for purely human opinions and even errors to become mixed with genuine communications from above. For this reason private visions and revelations need not be received with divine or theological, but can claim only human faith (*fides humana*), and it is strictly forbidden to publish miracles and private revelations as such before the Church has pronounced upon their genuineness through her legitimately constituted authorities.⁸

How strenuously the Church has always combatted superstition appears from the many laws she has made against it in the course of centuries and from the punishments she has at various times inflicted upon those who transgressed these laws.

⁸ *Conc. Trident., Sess. XXV, De Invocat., Venerat. et Reliquiis Sanctorum et Sacris Imaginibus,*

READINGS.—F. Walter, *Der Aberglaube*, pp. 373 sqq.—P. Laymann, *Theol. Mor.*, 7th ed., l. IV, tr. 10.—K. Eberle, *Der Tricenarius des hl. Gregorius*, Ratisbon, 1890.—A. Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter*, Freiburg 1902, pp. 87 sqq., 244 sqq.—A. Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. II, pp. 519 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 174 sqq.—Berardi, *Praxis Confessariorum*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., pp. 433 sqq.—Jas. J. Walsh, art. "Psychotherapy" in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII, pp. 549 sqq.—Cuttan, *Three Thousand Years of Mental Healing*, New York 1911.

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PART III

THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I

OBJECT, HISTORY, NUMBER, AND OBLIGATION OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

I. OBJECT.—Among the many ecclesiastical precepts contained in the Canon Law a few are preëminently called Commandments of the Church (*praecepta seu mandata Ecclesiae*) because they bind every Catholic who has attained the age of discretion. These commandments are but corollaries drawn from the precepts of the natural and positive divine law,¹ determining more accurately the manner or time of their observance.²

1 F. Suarez, *De Legibus*, l. IV, c. 1, n. 10: "*Haec [praecepta] pro universa ecclesia . . . solum sunt determinationes quaedam iuris divini moraliter necessariae hominibus, ut patet de praecepto annuae confessionis et communionis, de ieiuniis et festis diebus ac solvendis decimis.*" (*Opera Omnia*, V, 330).

2 St. Augustine, *Epist.*, 36 (*al.*

86), c. 11, n. 25: "*Ego in evangelicis et apostolicis literis totoque instrumento, quod appellatur Testamentum Novum, animo id revolvens video praeceptum esse ieiunium. Quibus autem diebus non oporteat ieiunare et quibus oporteat, praecepto Domini vel apostolorum non invenio definitum.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXIII, 147).—St. Thomas, *Summa*

As the worship of God by faith, hope, and charity cannot be left to the arbitrary judgment of the individual, the Church has formulated certain precepts for the purpose of inducing her children to obey the will of God and instructing them how to obey it. The character and purpose of these so-called Commandments of the Church is, therefore, essentially moral and ascetic. They refer partly to divine worship, partly to the reception of the Sacraments, and partly are directed against concupiscence and the pursuit of pleasure.

2. HISTORY.—The list of Commandments of the Church as it appears in our catechisms, is of comparatively recent origin. The Catechism of the Council of Trent does not even allude to them, though collections of these precepts had been compiled before that time. Three years before the appearance of the *Catechismus Romanus*, as it is generally called, the French Jesuit Edmund Auger published a *Catéchisme et Sommaire de la Religion Chrestienne*, in which it is stated

Theol., 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 3: "Sicut ad saeculares principes pertinet, praecepto legalia iuris naturalis determinativa tradere de his, quae pertinent ad utilitatem communem in temporalibus rebus, ita etiam ad praelatos ecclesiasticos pertinet, ea statutis praecipere, quae ad utilitatem communem fidelium pertinet in spiritualibus bonis. Dicitur est autem [art. 1] quod ieiunium utile est ad deletionem et cohibitionem culpaе et ad elevationem mentis in

spiritualia. Unusquisque autem ex naturali ratione tenetur tantum ieiuniis uti, quantum sibi necessarium est ad praedicta. Et ideo ieiunium in communi cadit sub praecepto legis naturae, sed determinatio temporis et modi ieiunandi secundum convenientiam et utilitatem populi christiani cadit sub praecepto iuris positivi, quod est a praelatis ecclesiae institutum, et hoc est ieiunium ecclesiae; aliud vero est ieiunium naturae."

that, besides the Ten Commandments of God, there are five other ancient precepts which every Catholic must observe. These five "Commandments of the Holy Catholic Church" seem to have been transcribed from the Small Catechism of Bl. Peter Canisius, first published in Germany in 1556. The *Summa Casuum Conscientiae* of Angelo de Clavasio, which appeared at Venice, in 1486, contains two separate and distinct lists of Church Commandments, which, though differing slightly from each other, are substantially identical with those now in force. Before Angelo de Clavasio these precepts had been catalogued by St. Antoninus, and consequently Villien is probably right when he dates the collection, as we have it, from the second third of the fifteenth century. Successive catechisms did not adhere closely to the earlier list, but since the second half of the seventeenth century catechisms everywhere give in a few precise numbers a summary of the obligations imposed by the Church on every Christian.³

3. NUMBER.—Angelo de Clavasio's *Summa* contains two lists of Church Commandments. The first enumerates five precepts, referring to (1) the celebration of feasts; (2) the obligation of hearing Mass; (3) fasting during Lent and

³ A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 2 sqq., St. Louis 1915.

on the vigils of holydays; (4) the duty of confession; (5) the reception of the Holy Eucharist; (6) the paying of tithes; and (7) the obligation of avoiding excommunicated persons. This is the longest and most complete of the older lists so far as known. The second is even more detailed. St. Antoninus's list runs as follows: (1) To observe the feast days; (2) to keep the fast on the days appointed by the Church, as throughout Lent; (3) to abstain from flesh meat every Friday; (4) to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation; (5) to go to confession at least once a year; (6) to communicate annually on Easter Sunday; (7) to pay the tithes; (8) to abstain from all acts prohibited under pain of excommunication; (9) to avoid excommunicated persons at divine worship and even at other times, in conversation, at table, etc., when association with them might be construed as contempt of the Church; (10) to stay away from Mass and divine office when celebrated by clerics who publicly live in concubinage.⁴

Later the number of these commandments was reduced to five, and this division is maintained up to the present day. These five commandments are enumerated as follows in the Catechism approved by Pope Pius X for the Province of Rome:

⁴ Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 sqq.

(1) To hear Mass on Sundays and all other holydays of obligation;

(2) To fast during Lent, on Ember Days, and on the appointed vigils, and not to eat meat on forbidden days;

(3) To confess at least once a year and to receive holy Communion at Easter time, each one in his own parish;

(4) To pay tithes to the Church according to usage;

(5) Not to celebrate weddings in prohibited seasons, that is, from the first Sunday of Advent to the feast of Epiphany, and from the first day of Lent to the octave of Easter. (This law has been modified by the new Code.)

To these general precepts some diocesan, provincial or national catechisms added one or more particular ones, imposed by local bishops or councils. Thus the German-English Catechism of Deharbe, edited for the United States of America, contains under number six the following precepts: Not to contract marriage without the presence of a priest and witnesses; not to solemnize weddings in forbidden times; not to espouse non-Catholics or those related within a prohibited degree, or to contract marriage in any way forbidden by the Church. Father Färber's Catechism, which is also widely used in this country, gives under number four the prohibition of affiliating with condemned secret societies.

In French Canada the bishops, on whom it everywhere rests to decide what teaching is most necessary for the faithful of their respective dioceses, emphasize the precept of paying tithes.

Certain American catechisms have adapted this precept to domestic conditions as follows: "Thou shalt contribute to the support of the Church and of the pastor according to thy means." ⁵

The catechism in common use in the Greek Catholic Church enumerates nine general precepts.

It has been contended that, from the moral point of view, it would be preferable to leave the observance of the precepts embodied in the so-called Commandments of the Church to the free-will of the faithful. This objection carries no weight if we consider the frailty of human nature after the fall. Even if every citizen knew what had to be done to protect the country against its enemies, it would still be necessary to have laws compelling all to do their duty. Human nature is weak and corrupt, and between knowing a thing to be right and doing it, there is a vast gulf, which the law endeavors to bridge by urging and, if necessary, compelling each individual to do what he perceives to be right. Even though every Catholic were firmly convinced that he must receive the Holy Eucharist at least once a year, in order to comply with our Saviour's wish and the purpose for which He instituted this Sacrament, many would disobey if the Church did not enjoin annual communion as a strict duty. This statement applies with even greater force to practices of mortification. How many Catholics would do penance if the Church did not oblige them to? Thus the Commandments of the Church influence both the intellect and the will by convincing the former and moving the latter to

⁵ Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 20 sqq.

act. In other words, the Church compels us, as it were, to perform our Christian duties.⁶

The Commandments of the Church are, and are intended to be, means of sanctification or instruments of perfection (*media sanctificationis sive instrumenta perfectionis*).

4. OBLIGATION.—The Commandments of the Church oblige strictly, *i. e.*, in conscience and under pain of mortal sin, unless the unimportance of the matter involved or inability or inadvertence excuses.⁷ To transgress any one of them, therefore, is a mortal sin, not only when it is done habitually, or in open contempt of ecclesiastical authority, or when accompanied by grave scandal, but as often as it is done without sufficient reason or legitimate excuse in an important matter.

A sufficient excuse is physical or moral impossibility arising from sickness or from notable danger to one's health, honor, or temporal possessions.

That the Commandments of the Church entail a strict obligation appears (1) from the importance of their subject matter, (2) from the common teaching of theologians, (3) from the custom of faithful Catholics, and (4) from certain explicit decisions of the Roman authorities.⁸

⁶ Wilmers, *Lehrbuch der Religion*, 6th ed., by Lehmkuhl, Vol. III, pp. 463 sq.

Cfr. *Conc. Trid.*, Sess. VI, can. 20; Sess. VII, *De Bapt.*, can. 7-8.

⁸ *Prop. damn. ab Alex. VII.*, n. 23: "*Frangens ieiunium ecclesiae, ad*

⁷ Matt. XVIII, 17; Luke X, 16.

The question, at *what age the Commandments of the Church begin to bind*, was long disputed among theologians. The Lateran Council declared that every faithful Catholic must confess and communicate "after he has arrived at the years of discretion." This law has been adopted into the New Code of Canon Law.⁹ According to the common teaching of theologians the *age of discretion* is reached when reason is sufficiently developed to distinguish good from evil; which means, on the average, at seven years.¹⁰ The law of abstinence binds all who have completed the seventh year; the law of fasting, all who have completed the twenty-first and not yet entered upon the sixtieth year.¹¹

In the early days of Christianity the faithful began to fast as soon as they were able. Some fasted at the age of fifteen, while others waited until they were twenty-one. Alexander of Hales, for canonical and physiological reasons, fixed the beginning of the obligation at eighteen, which was the age designated by the Church for admission to the religious state. St. Thomas held that the juridical obligation of fasting began at the age of twenty-one, because at this age, which marks the end of the third

quod tenetur, non peccat mortaliter nisi ex contemptu vel inobedientia hoc faciat, puta quia non vult se subiicere praecepto." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1123).—*Prop. damn. sub Innoc. XI., n. 52:* "*Praeceptum servandi festa non obligat sub mor-*

tali, seposito scandalo, si absit contemptus." (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1202).

⁹ Can. 906; 859, § 1.

¹⁰ Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, p. 170.

¹¹ Can. 1254.

septenary, bodily growth ceases and there is less need of food, as a rule.¹²

READINGS.—St. Antoninus, *Summa Theol.*, P. I, tit. xvii, p. 12.—Th. Tamburini, *Tractatus Quinque in Quinque Ecclesiae Praecepta*, Dillingen 1697.—A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, St. Louis 1915.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 563 sqq.—J. W. Melody in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, pp. 154 sq.—J. B. Ferreres, S. J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 382 sqq.

¹² *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 4 ad 2; Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 267 sq.

CHAPTER II

THE OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION

I. MEANING AND PURPOSE OF THIS COMMANDMENT.—Man, being dependent upon God every moment of his life, and constantly enjoying His blessings, naturally owes Him supreme worship and adoration always. The devout Catholic must, therefore, make his whole life, as it were, an act of uninterrupted divine service. But since it is impossible for him to worship His Maker actually at every moment, without interruption, the divine and the ecclesiastical law has set aside certain seasons in which he is bound to serve God more assiduously and to worship Him in a special manner.

“By this [the third] precept of the Law,” says the Roman Catechism, “is prescribed in due order that external worship which is due by us to God; for this is as it were a fruit of the preceding precept. Led by the faith and hope that we repose in Him, to worship Him piously in our inmost souls, we cannot but adore Him with external worship and thanksgiving. And as this is a

duty which cannot be easily discharged by those who are detained by the occupations of human affairs, a fixed time has been appointed, when it may be conveniently performed.”¹

The sanctification of the days and seasons thus appointed by the Church constitutes an essential part of divine worship. “To this it will materially conduce,” says the same authority, “if the people be given to understand and see clearly, how just and reasonable it is that we have some certain days which we should devote entirely to the divine worship, and on which we should acknowledge, adore, and venerate our Lord, from whom we have received supreme and innumerable blessings.”²

And again: “The worship of God and the practice of religion, which are expressed in this precept, exist in the law of nature, since it is ordained by nature that we should spend some hours in those things that belong to the worship of God, a proof of which is that we find among

¹ Cat. Rom., P. III, c. 4, qu. 1: “Hoc [tertio] legis praecepto externus ille cultus, qui Deo a nobis debetur, recte atque ordine praescribitur; est enim hic veluti quidam prioris praecepti fructus, quoniam, quem intimis sensibus pie colimus, fide et spe adducti, quam in eo positam habemus, non possumus eum non externo cultu venerari eidemque gratias agere. Et quoniam haec ab iis, qui humanarum rerum occupationibus detinentur, non facile

praestari possunt, certum tempus statutum est, quo ea commode effici queant.”

² Cat. Rom., P. III, c. 4, qu. 26: “Plurimum valet, ut populus scilicet intelligat ac plane perspiciat, quam iustum et rationi consentaneum sit, nos certos quosdam dies habere, quos totos divino cultui tribuamus Dominumque nostrum, a quo summa et innumerabilia beneficia accepimus, agnoscamus, colamus et veneremur.”

all nations certain fixed public festivals, which were consecrated to the performance of sacred and divine things.”³

I. Under the New Dispensation *Sunday* takes the place of the ancient Jewish Sabbath. The commandment which bade men to keep holy the Sabbath day was partly moral and partly ceremonial. It was moral in so far as man is obliged by the moral law of nature to devote some time exclusively to the worship of God; it was purely ceremonial in so far as it fixed the time to be devoted to this service. As a ceremonial precept, the law was susceptible of being changed, and was actually changed for prudent reasons by the Apostles.⁴ Whereas the Jewish observance of the Sabbath served as a reminder of the creation of the world, which was the first creative act of God, the celebration of the Christian Sunday is intended to remind us of the second or higher creation, namely, the redemption of the human race by the Son of God, more especially His Resurrection and the sending of the Holy Ghost,

³ *Ibid.*, qu. 6: “*Dei cultus ac religio, quae hoc [tertio] praecepto exprimitur, a naturae iure existit, quum illud natura comparatum sit, ut aliquot horas in iis, quae ad Dei cultum pertinet, versemur. Cuius rei argumento est, quod apud omnes nationes statas quasdam ferias easque publicas fuisse cernimus, quae sacris rebus ac divinis erant consecratae.*”

⁴ Acts XX, 7; 1 Cor. XVI, 2; Apoc. I, 10.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 122, art. 4, ad 4: “*Observantia diei dominicae in nova lege succedit observantiae sabbati non ex vi praecepti legis, sed ex constitutione ecclesiae et consuetudine populi christiani.*”—Cat. Rom., P. III, c. 4, qu. 18.

the seal and assurance of redemption. The true meaning of the commandment is that man shall set aside a certain period of time during which he refrains from bodily labor and devotes himself to divine worship.⁵

2. Besides Sunday, the Church has set aside certain festival days, known as *holydays of obligation*. This was done with a twofold purpose, first, to recall to the faithful particular mysteries of the Redemption and to induce them to venerate the Saints,—men and women in whom the grace of Jesus Christ has proved itself extraordinarily effective; secondly, to spur them on to insure their own sanctification by following the example of Christ and His Saints. The *feasts of the Saints*, are in the last analysis, feasts of our Lord Himself, who has given them the grace to conquer sin, death, and the world. These feasts should serve primarily to glorify God, through whom the Saints were able to practice virtue; secondarily, to thank Him, the Giver of all good things, for the graces and favors by means of which He has chosen them for His fa-

⁵ Gen. I, 33; Ex. XX, 8-11; XXXI, 17; Deut. V, 12 sqq.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1a 2ae, qu. 103, art. 3, ad 4: "*Sabbatum, quod significabat primam creationem, mutatur in diem dominicum, in quo commemoratur nova creatura inchoata in resurrectione Christi.*"—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 4, qu. 11: "*Verus ac proprius huius praecepti*

sensus eo spectat, ut homo et animo et corpore in eam curam incumbat, ut statuto aliquo tempore a negotiis corporisque laboribus feriatu Deum pie colat ac veneretur."—J. Winkler, *Der Sonntag*, Lucerne 1847, pp. 46 sqq.; G. Müller, *Sabbat und Sonntag*, Bremen 1898; J. Hehn, *Der israelitische Sabbat*, Münster 1909.

vorite children and made them co-heirs of Heaven. These festivals should, moreover, serve to remind us of our own helplessness. Being unworthy sinners, who have no right to be heard by God, we ask the Saints to intercede for us at the throne of mercy.⁶

Holydays of obligation must be kept in the same way as Sundays.

II. IN WHAT SUNDAY AND HOLYDAY OBSERVANCE CONSISTS.—The commandment to keep holy the Sundays and holydays of obligation involves a twofold duty, namely, to *abstain from servile work* and to *participate in certain prescribed acts of worship*.

I. Abstaining from servile labor and attending religious services are integral constituents of the one and eternal idea that has found expression in the Decalogue, and can no more be separated than body and soul in man. The body honors God by resting, the soul by participating in divine worship. In both respects the sanctification of the

⁶ 1 Cor. XV, 57; 1 John V, 4.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 4, qu. 19: "*Alios autem dies festos ab ecclesiae initio et consequentibus deinde temporibus Apostoli et sancti Patres nostri instituerunt, ut pie et sancte Dei beneficiorum memoriam coleremus. Inter eos autem celeberrimi habentur illi dies, qui ob redemptionis nostrae mysteria religioni consecrati sunt, deinde, qui sanctissimae Virginis Mariae, tum vero Apostolis ac martyribus ceterisque sanctis cum Christo regnanti-*

bus dicantur, in quorum victoria Dei bonitas et potentia laudatur, ipsis debiti honores tribuuntur atque ad eorum imitationem fidelis populus incitatur."—Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2^a 2^{ae}, qu. 13, art. 1, ad 2: "*Deus in sanctis suis laudatur, in quantum laudantur opera, quae Deus in sanctis efficit.*"—On the relation of the Old Testament holydays to those of the New Testament see Saint Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 1^a 2^{ae}, qu. 103, art 3, ad 4.

Sunday corresponds to a necessity of human nature and is to be regarded as part of the natural law, which has merely been determined in a more precise way by positive law.⁷

The ethical, economic, and hygienic importance of the Christian observance of Sundays and holidays is now pretty generally acknowledged, and there is hardly a civilized State that does not consider it part of its duty to enforce Sunday rest and the observance of such additional holidays as it officially recognizes.⁸

2. Sunday is not only a day of prayer, it is also *a day of rest*. As man requires a certain number of hours daily for sleep, so he needs a periodical respite from work. That the observance of Sunday as a day of rest corresponds to a deep-seated need of human nature is evident from the venerable age of this institution, as well as from the fact that, when the French government, at the time of the Revolution, attempted to substitute the tenth for the traditional seventh day, the people refused to accept the change.

The universal experience of mankind shows that servile work on Sunday is unhygienic and economically unprofitable. Sunday observance

⁷ F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 370 sq.

⁸ G. Uhlhorn, *Ueber die Sonntagsfrage in ihrer sozialen Bedeutung*, Leipzig 1870; P. Niemeyer, *Die Sonntagsruhe vom Standpunkte der Gesundheitslehre*, Berlin 1876;

R. Engelbert, *Der Sonntag*, Leipsic 1898; P. Engelmann, *Le Repos du Dimanche dans l'Industrie*, Paris 1899; Jos. Husslein, S.J., *The World Problem*, New York 1918, p. 82.

increases the laboring man's capacity for work and tends to lengthen his life.⁹

3. Sunday is also *a day of recreation and innocent amusement*, by which men may recuperate from their labors and regain some of the lost joy of life.

"The prospect of one day of rest frequently intervening," says Andrew Carnegie, "gives a toiler something bright to look forward to, without which his life must stretch before him as one unceasing, unvarying drag. In this one blessed day his slavery ceases, the shackles fall. He is no longer a brute—fed and clothed solely because of his physical powers, his capacity to bear burdens—but a higher being, with tastes, pleasures, friends. Life becomes worth living. The man puts on his best clothes—and there is much in this—the woman gives her cottage an extra brushing up. Something extra is prepared for dinner—there is a great deal in this, too—and, in short, the day is marked by a hundred little differences from those of labor—a stroll in the fields, a visit to relatives, or a meeting with neighbors at church, all in their best; and then the swelling organ and the choir—these things lie closely at the root of all improvements; and if ever the race is to be lifted to a higher platform—and who shall dare doubt it?—the weekly day of rest will prove itself an agency in the good work. . . . The best mode of improving its most precious hours for the toiling masses is therefore a question of infinite moment, apart altogether from the question of its divine character, and viewed only as a human enactment of the highest wisdom. It would seem clear that to make this only respite from manual labor a day exclu-

⁹ Cfr. P. Barth, *Schlaf und Sonntag*, Bâle 1899.

sively set apart for the mournful duty of bemoaning our manifold shortcomings—which must at best give rise to gloomy thoughts—would defeat the purposes I have indicated. I want a compromise—church service in the morning, with a sermon ‘leaning to the side of mercy,’ as Sidney Smith suggested, which meant that it should not exceed twenty minutes, for, as one wit says, ‘a minister who can’t strike ile [oil] in twenty minutes should quit *boring*’—and then the fields and streams for the toilers who are cooped up in factories and workshops all the week long, or a visit to picture galleries, or to musical concerts of a high order, . . . to anything that would tend to brighten their existence. I am now convinced that there is an important change to be made in the mode of keeping our Sundays—the cessation of labor as far as it is possible, to remain a cardinal point, but better facilities to be provided for cultivating the higher tastes of our poor workers, that the day may be to them indeed ‘the golden jewel which clasps the circle of the week.’ ”¹⁰

“The old privileges,” says Bishop von Keppler, “which came from no over-lord, but were due simply to God and the sun, were called ‘sun-rights.’ In the same sense, Sunday may be called the people’s ‘sun-right.’ What rights and what joys are lacking in the individual life when Sunday counts as nothing, when servile work burdens the Lord’s Day or debauchery dishonors it! The day is made a day of real joy through a wonderful combination of the natural and supernatural pleasures contributed by godly rest, the loosening of labor’s yoke, the united worship of God, the sermon at high mass, the outing in the fields and woods, and the hours of quiet enjoyment at the family hearth. In the *Hymelstras* ”¹¹ Brother Stephen gives a

¹⁰ Andrew Carnegie, *Round the World*, New York 1884, pp. 326 sq. ¹¹ Published at Augsburg, Germany, in 1484.

charming description of the father of a family taking 'his little folk' to the sermon and afterwards asking them what they have heard, supplementing their observations with his own. Then he gets his little drink and sings his good little song, and 'thus he and his little flock were happy in the Lord.'"¹²

In his *Book of Childhood*, Bogumil Goltz has described the fascination of Sunday for the child mind: "Ah! on this day nothing was the same as on school days and work days. We felt the difference in the air we breathed and the soil we trod; we drank it in with the very water. The sunbeams flashed it into the soul; the sparrows twittered it among the notes of the church organ; the trees told it to one another with rustling leaves. Before sunrise, in the grey dawn, the coming hours of happiness were borne on the wings of the morning wind to this chosen day. O Lord, my God, in very truth it was Sunday,—Sunday in every hour and minute, in every twinkling of an eye, in every flash of a sunbeam, in every throb of the pulse, in every drop of blood, in all the body and all the soul. One could hear and see nothing, be aware of nothing, will nothing, think nothing, but just that it was Sunday, the sacred day. All that one looked at or experienced, was different from that on other days,—the same and yet not the same, for it was illumined, hallowed, and invested with the mysterious radiance of Sunday."¹³

3. In regard to Sunday rest the Church forbids:

a) *Servile labor* (*opera servilia*), i. e., the rough and harder sort of manual work which is

¹² P. W. von Keppler, *More Joy*,
tr. by Jos. McSorley, C.S.P., St.
Louis 1914, p. 93.

¹³ Quoted by Keppler, *op. cit.*,
pp. 93 sq.

ordinarily done by common workmen and which used to be done by slaves. This prohibition is based on the very object for which the Sunday observance was instituted. The day could not be devoted to the service of God were men to engage in their usual pursuits.¹⁴

Any work that is in itself servile, retains this characteristic even if performed for pleasure or to while away the time. Contrariwise, any occupation that is not in itself servile, does not become such if performed for material gain or accompanied by bodily fatigue, for the intention of the doer does not change the nature of the work.¹⁵

Opposed to servile labor, and consequently permitted on Sundays, are (1) the so-called *opera liberalia* or *artes liberales*, i. e., all work predominantly intellectual and aiming at the development of the mind, such as reading, writing, instructing others, etc.; (2) the so-called *opera media sive communia*, mixed work which serves both the bodily and the spiritual interests of man, such as traveling, fishing, hunting, etc.; (3) do-

¹⁴ Lev. XXIII, 25; Ex. XX, 8 sqq.—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 4, qu. 21: "Quibus verbis ad id primum instituimur, ut quaecunque divinum cultum impedire possunt, omnino vitemus. Facile enim perspicere potest, omne servilis operis genus prohiberi, non quidem ea re, quod sua natura aut turpe aut malum sit, sed quoniam mentem nostram a divino cultu, qui finis praecepti est, abstrahit."

¹⁵ H. Busembaun, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, l. III, tr. 3, c. 1, dub. 1, resp. 1, n. 1: "Impertinens est ad rationem operis servilis, utrum fiat ex lucro an ex recreatione, ex hac an ista intentione, pia, vana aut turpi."—*IBID.*, n. 2: "Impertinens quoque est, sive fiat cum defatigatione et labore, sive non, sive brevi sive longo tempore etc., quia nihil horum mutat naturam operis."

mestic labors (*opera domestica*) that cannot be postponed or performed in advance, such as cooking food, feeding cattle, and so forth.

Among the causes which excuse a man from the observance of the law forbidding servile labor on Sundays and holydays of obligation are: dispensation, legitimate custom, necessity, charity (nursing the sick, burying the dead, etc.), piety (the erection of altars, decoration of streets and houses for religious ceremonies, etc.), and the public welfare or security (postal service, running the railroads, etc.).

In determining what is servile work and therefore forbidden, says Fr. Slater, "we must consider not only the nature of the work itself, but also the way in which it is done, the light in which it is commonly regarded, and other circumstances. Thus it is usually held that although the rougher work of the sculptor is servile and unlawful, the more delicate is liberal and may be done on a Sunday. Similarly, fishing with rod and line is not unlawful, but going out to sea with a fishing smack and plying the trade in the ordinary working-day way is forbidden. In the same way one who lives by photography should not ply his trade on a Sunday, but it would not be wrong for an amateur to do the same work on that day by way of recreation and amusement." ¹⁶

The exercise of the *barber's trade* is generally regarded as licit on Sunday because it appertains to the necessary care of the body. Barbers are not, however, on that account dispensed from hearing Mass. One compelled to stay away from Mass would be bound in conscience to look for another position and meanwhile would be excused from hearing Mass only in case obedience to the law of the Church would be likely to cost him his job.

It is to be regretted that so many men are now-a-days compelled to work on Sunday, often under conditions which make it impossible for them to go to church. Thus the Lord's Day is withdrawn from its sublime purpose and degraded to profane and worldly uses.

The inhabitants of large cities should by all means be given an opportunity to get out into the open and enjoy nature, and the farmer has the right occasionally to visit the city on Sunday without incurring loss of time or money. Traveling is a biological necessity that does not, in itself, contravene the commandment of keeping holy the Sabbath day.

b) The Church further forbids *business* and *court proceedings* (*opera forensia*), such as public sales, the hearing of witnesses, etc., in so far as they disturb the public peace and are thus opposed to the sanctification of the Lord's Day. Annual *fairs* that are customarily held upon a holyday of obligation had better be transferred to another day. *Theatrical performances*, baseball games, and similar entertainments may be permitted on Sundays and holydays of obligation for the reason that, as St. Alphonsus says, "such dem-

onstrations of joy are morally necessary to the common weal." ¹⁷

The prohibition of servile labor and of business and court proceedings obliges, generally speaking, under pain of mortal sin, but admits of *parvitas materiae* (*operis seu temporis*). According to a more probable opinion, now held by most theologians, it is not a mortal sin to work, say, two or two and one-half hours on Sunday, provided the work engaged in is not extremely servile in character and does not exhaust the body. Scandal or disturbance of the peace may render even a shorter period mortally sinful. In regard to *opera forensia* the determining factor is not the duration of the proceedings) (*quantitas temporis*), but the nature or character of the work done (*qualitas operis*).

4. The religious observance of Sundays and holydays of obligation implies:

a) The performance of *works of piety* and *charity*, e.g., praying, listening to the word of God, spiritual reading, reception of the Sacraments, visiting the sick, etc. The main purpose for which we are commanded to abstain from bodily labor and business on Sundays and holydays of obligation, is that we may be able to devote ourselves more freely to the worship of God and to works of mercy. "We observe the Sabbath fully and perfectly," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "when we render to God

¹⁷ Theol. Mor., I. III, n. 304:
"Ratio, quia talia signa laetitiae
sunt reipublicae moraliter necessaria

et ideo permittuntur ex consuetudine." (Ed. Gaudé, I. 567).

the duties of piety and religion; and this is evidently the 'Sabbath' which Isaias ¹⁸ calls 'delightful,' for festivals are, as it were, the delight of God and of pious men. If, then, to this religious and holy observance of the Sabbath are added works of mercy, the rewards proposed to us in the same chapter are indeed very great and numerous." ¹⁹

To hear the word of God on Sundays and holydays of obligation is not contained in the letter, but is certainly demanded by the spirit of the commandment with which we are dealing. The Church, by compelling her ministers to preach on Sundays and holydays ²⁰ clearly expects that the faithful will listen with fervor and devotion. Attendance at the sermon is demanded, first, by the reverence we owe to the word of God, and, secondly, by the duty we have of informing ourselves about the truths of our holy religion.²¹ To miss the sermon purposely and habitually indicates lukewarmness and dislike of God.²²

The word of God should be listened to earnestly, rever-

¹⁸ Is. LVIII, 13.

¹⁹ *Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 4, qu. 10; cfr. qu. 25-28.

²⁰ *Conc. Trid.*, Sess. V, *De Ref.*, c. 2; Sess. XXII, *De Sacrif. Missae*, c. 8; Sess. XXIV, *De Ref.*, c. 4.

²¹ Cfr. Matt. XXVIII, 19 sq.; Luke X, 16; Acts II, 37-41; IV, 4; VIII, 5 sq.; Rom. X, 14, 17.

²² Cfr. H. Busembaum, S.J., *Medulla Theol. Mor.*, l. III, tr. 3, c. 1, dub. 3: "Praecipitur auditio concionis, non tamen sub mortali, nisi quatenus quisque tenetur discere necessaria ad salutem. Dixi, nisi quatenus etc., quia homines rudiores ignorantes praecipua mysteria fidei,

ea praesertim, quae sub gravi obligatione eos scire teneri dictum est, tenentur lege caritatis (si alias ea commode addiscere non possint) sub gravi peccato concioni vel potius catechesi interesse. Bonacina addens, eo casu concionem etiam missae praeferendam esse."—Cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 308 (ed. Gaudé, I, 569).—*Cat. Rom.*, P. III, c. 4, qu. 25: "Attente diligenterque sacra concio fidelibus audienda est, nihil enim minus ferendum est neque tam profecto indignum, quam Christi verba contemnere aut neglegenter audire."

ently, and with an ardent desire to utilize it for the good of the soul.²³

It has been asserted that towards the end of the Middle Ages the sermon ceased to constitute an integral part of divine service. This is an error. The medieval confession books, issued for the instruction of the faithful, inculcate the hearing of the sermon on Sundays and holydays as a strict duty, neglect of which is on a level with failure to hear Mass. Bernardine of Busti, an Italian Franciscan, who died in the year 1500, in a sermon declares that every Catholic is obliged under pain of sin to hear the word of God and that those who are uninstructed in the fundamental truths of salvation commit a mortal sin if they neglect to hear an occasional sermon. To the question what would be more meritorious,—to attend Mass or to hear the word of God, he replies that on week-days it is better to hear a sermon, whereas a distinction should be made in regard to Sundays and holydays of obligation: he who is familiar with the truths necessary for salvation must attend Mass in order not to violate the express commandment of the Church; but he who is not well instructed in these truths, must hear the sermon rather than attend Mass, because the latter is enjoined by a precept of the Church only, whereas the former is commanded by a positive law of God.²⁴

b) To *hear Mass* on Sundays and holydays of obligation is a strictly binding precept.²⁵

a) It implies assisting at a *whole* Mass. He who is unable to hear a whole Mass, should try

²³ Matt. XIII, 1 sqq.; Luke VIII, 4 sqq.

²⁴ Cfr. *Der Katholik*, Mayence 1899, I, 95 sq.

²⁵ Cfr. Vol. II of this Handbook, p. 133.

to be present at least at the essential and integral parts of the Holy Sacrifice, *i. e.*, consecration and communion. Should he be legitimately prevented from assisting at these essential portions, however, he is under no obligation to assist at the remaining ceremonies, which are merely accidental.²⁶

Wilfully to *miss* any part of the Mass on Sundays or holydays of obligation is a sin,—either grave or light, according to the nature and length of the part missed. The more important parts of the Mass which may not be missed without grave sin are: (1) from the point of view of duration (*ratione durationis*), the part extending from the psalm *Iudica* to the offertory, inclusive; (2) from the point of view of dignity (*ratione dignitatis*), the part from the preface, exclusively, to the consecration; the part from the consecration to the Pater noster; the consecration and communion taken together, and the consecration alone, though not (*probabiliter*) the communion alone. One who leaves the church before and returns immediately after consecration, does not, strictly speaking, satisfy the precept.²⁷

To determine the guilt of those who come *late* to Mass, says Noldin, we must look, not so much to the part missed, as to the degree of negligence of which they are guilty and their awareness of the danger of not hearing the whole Mass. He who fails to hurry to church because he thinks he will miss only a small part of Mass, commits a venial sin, even if he arrives after the offertory, whereas he who is in doubt, or anticipates that he will miss an

26 H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 278; Ballerini-Palmieri, *Opus Theol. Mor.*, II, n.

27 Suarez, *De Eucharistia*, qu. 88, sect. 2, n. 6; Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, II, 278 sq.

important part of the holy Sacrifice, sins grievously, even if he should arrive in time for the Gloria.²⁸

Does one who hears one-half each of two different Masses comply with the law of the Church? If he hears the two halves simultaneously, he does not comply with his duty, because the Mass, by its very nature, consists of successive parts.²⁹ If he hears the two halves successively, one after the other, and the consecration and communion form part of the same Mass, he satisfies his obligation, because he hears one complete Mass; but if the consecration and communion do not form part of the same Mass, he does not satisfy his obligation because the parts at which he attends do not constitute an integral sacrifice.³⁰

From what we have said it follows that if one has not heard a complete Mass, he is bound, if possible, to supply the defect (*obligatio supplendi*), under pain of mortal sin if the parts omitted were important, under pain of merely venial sin if they were small and unimportant.³¹

β) The duty of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation implies a *bodily presence* which is both moral and continuous (*praesentia moralis et continua*). A person is morally present at Mass, (1) if he is morally united with the celebrant, (2) if he kneels, stands or sits somewhere within the church or near it in a place from which he is able either to see or hear the celebrant,

28 Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, II, 279.

29 Innocent XI condemned the following proposition (n. 53): "*Satisfacit praecepto ecclesiae de audiendo sacro, qui duas eius partes,*

immo quator simul a diversis celebrantibus audit."

30 Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, II, 279.

31 *Ibid.*

or at least to follow the sacred rite by watching those who can see or hear the priest at the altar.

Therefore Mass may be lawfully attended *anywhere within the church*, including the choir, even behind the organ, or in some side chapel, from which the celebrant can be neither seen nor heard, provided the hearer can follow the sacred ceremony by attending to the ringing of the bells or watching others who are able to see what is going on.

Mass may be lawfully heard also in the *sacristy* or some other place near the altar, from which the celebrant can be seen or, if the door is closed, can at least be heard.

Those who leave the church for a brief space to ring the bells or fetch the wine, remain morally present because they are participating in the sacrifice and their withdrawal from it is but temporary and for the purpose of co-operation.

One may also hear Mass *outside the church*, near the door, even though it is closed, provided the ceremonies can be followed by means of the sense of hearing.

The same is true of one who stands some distance away from the church and cannot approach closer because of the attending multitude.³²

The precept of hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation may be satisfied in *any church*, in any *public* or *semi-public oratory*, and also in private chapels on cemeteries, but not in other private chapels, unless a privilege to this effect has been expressly granted by the Holy See.³³

Does one satisfy the obligation of hearing Mass if he goes to confession while the Holy Sacrifice is being of-

³² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³³ C. I. C., can. 1249; cfr. can. 1190.

ferred? Since going to confession does not exclude a certain degree of external attention, Ballerini-Palmieri, Génicot, Noldin, and other authors hold that one who goes to confession in the course of one Mass need not assist at another in order to comply with his Sunday duty.³⁴

γ) Mass must be heard with a *right intention* and with *due attention*.

(1) One need not have the formal intention of complying with the commandment of the Church; it is sufficient to attend religiously, *i. e.*, with a view to worship. Therefore, one who would go to Church merely to hear the singing would not comply with his obligation, whereas a boy who went to Mass because he was compelled to go by his parents, would satisfy the ecclesiastical precept.

(2) *Attention* is internal or external, according as it excludes distraction from within or from without. External attention negatively consists in avoiding every outward activity incompatible with internal attention; positively, in a certain vague consciousness that one is assisting at the holy Sacrifice. *External* attention at least is necessary to hear Mass, because without external attention the act would be neither human nor religious. Therefore one does not satisfy his obligation if he reads profane books or attentively

³⁴ Ballerini-Palmieri, *Opus Theol.* 1909, Vol. I, n. 431; Noldin, *op. Mor.*, 2nd ed., II, n. 773; Génicot, *cit.*, II, p. 278.
Theol. Mor. Inst., 7th ed., Bruxelles

studies paintings or inscriptions while assisting at Mass. The moral law of nature and the virtue of religion furthermore require that internal attention which is part of the reverence man owes to God. The ecclesiastical precept does not demand internal attention, and, consequently, one would satisfy his obligation under the law even if he were (either voluntarily or involuntarily) distracted during Mass.

As the Church merely requires assistance at Mass, but does not prescribe any particular prayers to be recited during the ceremony, the question what kind of attention is necessary to satisfy the obligation resolves itself into this: whether an act of divine worship can be performed with a distracted mind. Opinions differ on this head; but, as Noldin points out, the opposing groups are not so far apart as it may seem, since those authors who insist on the necessity of internal attention require such a small degree thereof³⁵ that it really does not amount to much more than what the authors of the opposing group mean when they speak of purely external attention.³⁶ Therefore, he says, a man does not satisfy his obligation if he sleeps during a considerable portion of the Mass and is thus unable to realize what is going on upon the altar. But he who dozes so lightly as to be aware, at least in a confused manner, of what is going on, even though he nods during a considerable part of the Mass, satisfies his obligation. The same is true of one who gossips with another, because this act does not preclude that confused kind of attention which is sufficient to satisfy the law.

³⁵ St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*,
I, III, n. 313.

³⁶ Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*,
II, p. 277.

Those who play the organ, sing, take up the collection, serve as ushers, and so forth, satisfy their obligation even though they are occupied throughout the whole Mass, because the acts they perform do not exclude the required attention. For the same reason one who would assist at the holy Sacrifice in a half-wake or semi-drunk condition would satisfy at least the letter of the law.³⁷

c) It remains to deal with the *reasons that excuse* men from attending Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

As this precept does not belong to the *graviora*, any really weighty reason will excuse one from compliance with it. The more common reasons may be conveniently grouped under four heads: (1) Moral impossibility; (2) charity; (3) office or occupation; (4) custom.

(1) By reason of moral impossibility are excused:

(a) Those who live too far away from church. According to St. Alphonsus all, even those in good health, are excused from hearing Mass on Sundays if they have an hour and a quarter's walk to church, or even less, if the weather is bad or the person weak. Those who are able to ride or drive are not excused, unless the distance is at least twice that which a man can walk in an hour and a quarter. Busembaum adds that due regard should be paid in this matter to the custom of the country or neighborhood.

³⁷ Noldin, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

(b) Those who are afraid of losing their honor or reputation either because they lack becoming clothes, or girls who have become pregnant in consequence of secret fornication, unless they have an opportunity to attend early in the morning.

(c) Those who are compelled to travel or are unable to interrupt a necessary journey already begun.

(d) Those who have reason to fear a notable loss of worldly goods; but this loss must be considerable, measured by the status and condition of the owner.

(e) The sick and convalescent, who cannot attend Mass except with grave danger to their health or a notable retardation in their recovery. Whether such danger is really to be feared, does not necessarily require the decision of a physician or a priest, but may be determined by the patient himself, provided he is capable of forming a prudent judgment. Generally speaking, one is excused from attending Mass if his condition is such that he omits other important affairs involving an equal effort for fear of injury or relapse.³⁸

Not a few persons in delicate health find the air in church oppressive. If it affects them seriously, for instance, by causing difficulty in

³⁸ Ballerini-Palmieri, *Opus Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 803.

breathing or fainting spells, they are excused from assisting at Mass.³⁹

(f) Those who work in offices or factories, and whose occupation is such that they cannot get away without grave inconvenience or danger. When there is no real necessity, however, the employer is in duty bound to give his employees time enough to attend Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

(g) Wives and children who cannot comply with their duty because it would excite the husband or father to furious anger; also soldiers who would incur vexations on the part of their officers or subject themselves to continuous and intolerable slurs on the part of their fellow soldiers.

(2) The demands of charity excuse the following persons from hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation:

(a) Those in charge of the sick and infirm.

(b) Those who assist others in case of fire or flood.

(c) Those who have reason to hope that by their presence elsewhere they will be able to prevent sin.

(3) By reason of their office or occupation the

³⁹ Capellmann, *Medicina Pastoralis*, pp. 90 sq.

following are excused from hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation:

(a) Soldiers on duty; watchmen in cities and villages; shepherds in care of flocks; the custodians of buildings in places where but one Mass is celebrated, etc. The superiors of all such persons, however, are in duty bound to permit their subjects or employees to hear Mass whenever possible.

(b) Mothers and nurses who can neither leave their charges nor take them along to church.

(c) Servants who cannot get away because of urgent duties. These are, however, obliged to hear Mass if they can do so without great inconvenience, *e.g.*, by rising earlier in the morning. In case they are prevented by their employers, they may acquiesce if they have reason to fear serious consequences, but if the inconvenience to be apprehended is light, they should do their duty and bravely make the sacrifice which it involves. If they are regularly or frequently prevented from going to church on Sundays, servants should seek another position.

(d) Those who have to prepare food or provide other necessities of life; but where there are several Masses, such persons, with a modicum of good will, ought to be able to attend one of them.

(4) Custom in some countries or places ex-

cuses certain classes of persons from attendance at Sunday Mass. Among these classes we will mention:

(a) Women for a month or six weeks after childbirth.

(b) Widows who remain secluded at home for a month after the death of their husbands.

(c) Brides in countries where it is not customary for them to attend Mass on the Sundays when the banns of marriage are proclaimed.⁴⁰

This is an appropriate place to add a few words about the so-called holy or *closed seasons*, during which the Church wishes her children to eschew noisy celebrations and festivities. They are Advent, until Christmas inclusively, and Lent, *i.e.*, the time from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, inclusively. During these seasons known as *tempora clausa*) the solemn nuptial blessing is forbidden, though under the new Code the Bishop may allow it to be given for a grave reason.⁴¹

With the so-called *Easter duty*, *i.e.*, the obligation of confessing one's mortal sins, if one has had the misfortune to commit such, and receiving holy Communion once a year, during the paschal

⁴⁰ In the above we have followed Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, II, pp. 282 sqq.

⁴¹ C. I. C., can. 1108, § 2.

season, we shall deal *infra*, pp. 388 sqq.⁴² The Easter duty binds all the faithful who have reached the age of discretion, and was imposed to remind them of the institution of the Holy Eucharist and to prevent them from starving their souls. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven," says the Lord; "if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever."⁴³

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 122, art. 4.—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, III, dist. 37, art. 5.—Sporer-Bierbaum, *Theologia Moralis*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 730 sqq.—St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, l. III, n. 263–307.—W. Wilmers, S.J., *Lehrbuch der Religion*, Vol. III, 6th ed. (edited by A. Lehmkuhl, S.J.), pp. 468 sqq.—J. B. Wirthmüller, *Die moralische Tugend der Religion*, pp. 522 sqq.—K. A. H. Kellner, *Heortology. A History of the Christian Festivals from Their Origin to the Present Day*, English ed., London 1908, pp. 6 sqq.—A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church*, English ed., St. Louis 1915, pp. 1 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 383 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 273 sqq.

⁴² See also Vol. II of this Handbook, pp. 125, 152.

⁴³ John VI, 51 sq.; cfr. Rom. VI, 4 sqq.; Col. III, 3.

CHAPTER III

THE LAW OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

SECTION I

DEFINITION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF FASTING

I. DEFINITION.—To fast, broadly speaking, means to abstain from sensual pleasure or to mortify the senses from a virtuous motive. In a narrower sense it means to abstain from food and drink as a means of penance and moral perfection. Fasting, therefore, is an essentially virtuous act (*actus virtutis abstinentiae*).¹

The theologians distinguish a fivefold kind of fasting:

(a) *ieiunium spirituale*, which consists in refraining from sin;

(b) *ieiunium naturale*, which consists in abstaining from food and drink before the reception of the Holy Eucharist (also called *ieiunium Eucharisticum*);²

(c) *ieiunium morale*, which consists in the moderate use of food and drink;

¹ St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 1 sq.; cfr. qu. 141, art. 1; qu. 146, art. 2. ² Cfr. this Handbook, Vol. II, pp. 128 sqq.

(d) *ieiunium ecclesiasticum*, i.e., the bodily fasting (*ieiunium corporale*) enjoined by the third commandment of the Church;

(e) *ieiunium poenale*, i.e., fasting for penitential reasons over and above the measure imposed by the Church.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FASTING.—Fasting has a twofold signification, (a) moral-ascetical and (b) social.

a) As a moral and an ascetical practice, fasting was known among the ancient heathen, and is partly recommended and partly enjoined by Divine Revelation³ for the reason that to abstain from permissible pleasures of the palate, if done as a matter of duty and for the purpose of strengthening the spiritual powers of the soul, is an excellent means of suppressing lustful appetites, doing penance for one's sins, and advancing in grace and virtue. The angel said to Tobias "Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold."⁴ Jesus declared that a certain kind of evil spirits "is not cast out

³ Cfr. Deut. IX, 18 sq.; 2 Kings XII, 16; Jud. IV, 8; VIII, 6; Joel II, 12; Matt. IV, 2; 2 Cor. VI, 5.—St. Leo the Great says (*Serm.*, XV (al. XIV, c. 2): "*De quorum [pietatis officiorum] numero est etiam decima huius mensis solemne ieiunium, quod non ideo neglegendum est, quia de observantia veteris legis assumptum est, tamquam hoc de illis sit, quae inter discretionem ciborum, inter baptismatum*

differentias et avium pecudumque hostias se destiterunt. Illis enim quae rerum futurarum figuras gerebant impletis, quae significaverunt finita sunt. Ieiuniorum vero utilitatem Novi Testamenti gratia non removit et continentiam corpori atque animae semper profuturam pia observatione suscepit." (Migne, P. L., LIV, 175).

⁴ Tob. XII, 8.

but by prayer and fasting.”⁵ The Apostles and disciples are often described as fasting.⁶ The Church prays in her Lenten Preface: “O God, who by means of bodily fasting dost restrain the evil passions, uplift the heart and freely bestow virtue with its reward. . . .”⁷ St. Ambrose calls fasting “the food of the mind,” “the life of the angels,” “the death of sin,” “the root of grace,” and “the foundation of chastity.”⁸ In a sermon formerly attributed to St. Augustine fasting is described as “cleansing the mind, elevating the senses, and subjecting the flesh to the spirit.” It “disperses the mists of concupiscence, extinguishes the fires of lust, and kindles the light of charity.”⁹ St. Leo the Great says that nothing is more efficacious for bringing us nearer to God and resisting the blandishments of sin, than fasting. “Fasting has always been the food by which virtue is nourished.”¹⁰

⁵ Matt. XVII, 20.

⁶ Acts XIII, 3; XIV, 22.

⁷ Miss. Rom., Praef. in Quadrag.:

“Deus, qui corporali ieiunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris et praemia.”

⁸ De Elia et Ieiunio, c. 3, n. 4:

“Quid est ieiunium nisi substantia et imago coelestis? Ieiunium reflectio animae, cibus mentis est ieiunium, vita est angelorum ieiunium, culpa mors, excidium delictorum, remedium salutis, radix gratiae, fundamentum est castitatis.” (Migne, P. L., XIV, 699).

⁹ Ps.-Augustine, Appendix Serm., 73 (al. 230, De Temp.), n. 1:

“Ieiunium purgat mentem, sublevat sensum, carnem spiritui subicit. Ieiunium cor facit contribulatum et humiliatum, quod Deus non spernit. Ieiunium concupiscentiae nebulas dispergit, libidinum ardores extinguit, castitatis vero lumen accendit.” (Migne, P. L., XXXIX, 1887).

¹⁰ St. Leo M., Serm., XII (al. XI), c. 4: “Tria sunt quae maxime ad religiosas pertinent actiones, oratio scilicet, ieiunium et elemosyna. . . . Oratione enim propitiatio Dei quaeritur, ieiunio concupiscentia carnis extinguitur, elemosynis peccata redimuntur (Deut.

In the ideal sense, says Bishop Linsenmann,¹¹ to fast means to abstain from sin.¹² It has never been the wish of the Church that abstinence from material food and drink should supplant fasting in this ideal or spiritual sense, but she regards bodily fasting, both in its ascetic aspect (mortification) and from the religious and mystical point of view (sadness, penance) as a condition of sanctification, its beginning and means, because it is only by religious exercises and bodily abstinence that men are enabled to appropriate the fruits of the atonement and thereby attain forgiveness of sin.¹³

iv, 24), *simulque per omnia Dei in nobis imago renovatur, si et in laudem eius semper parati et ad purificationem nostram sine cessatione solliciti et ad sustentationem proximi indesinenter simus intenti. Haec triplex observantia, dilectissimi, omnium virtutum comprehendit effectus. Haec ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei pervenit et a Spiritu Sancto inseparabiles facit. Quia in orationibus permanet fides recta, in ieiuniis innocens vita, in eleemosynis mens benigna.*" (Migne, P. L., LIV, 171).—IDEM, *Serm.*, XIII (al. XII), c. 1: "*Quid potest efficacius esse ieiunio, cuius observantiâ appropinquamus Deo et resistentes vitia blanda superamus? Semper enim virtuti cibus ieiunium fuit. De abstinence prodeunt castae cogitationes, rationabiles voluntates, salubriora consilia. Et per voluntarias afflictiones caro concupiscentiis moritur, virtutibus spiritus innovatur.*" (P. L., LIV, 172.)

¹¹ *Moraltheologie*, p. 383.

¹² Cfr. *Is.* LVIII, 2 sqq.; *Pastor Hermæ*, Simil. V, c. 1, 4-5; c. III, 5-6 (Funk, *Patres Apostolici*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 530, 535; Kirsopp Lake's ed. in *The Apostolic*

Fathers [Loeb Classical Library], Vol. II, pp. 153, 159 sq.)—St. Augustine, *Tract. in Ioâ.*, XVII, n. 4: "*Ieiunium magnum et generale est abstinere ab iniquitatibus et ab illicitis voluptatibus saeculi, quod est perfectum ieiunium.*" (Migne, P. L., XXXV, 1529).

¹³ St. Jerome, *Epist.*, 130 (al. 8), n. 11: "*Sic debes ieiunare, ut non palpites vel respirare vix possis et comitum tuarum vel porteris vel traharis manibus, sed ut fracto corporis appetitu nec in lectione nec in psalmis nec in vigiliis solito quid minus facias. Ieiunium non perfecta virtus, sed caeterarum virtutum fundamentum est, et sanctificatio atque pudicitia, sine qua nemo videbit Deum, gradus praebebat ad summa scandentibus, nec tamen, si sola fuerit, virginem poterit coronare.*" (P. L., XXII, 1116).—IDEM, *Epist.*, 148 (al. 14), n. 22: "*Cave ne si ieiunare aut abstinere coeperis, te putes iam esse sanctam. Haec enim virtus adiumentum est, non perfectio sanctitatis, . . . Tunc, inquam, praeclara est abstinence, tunc pulchra atque magnifica castigatio corporis, quum est animus ieiunus a vitiis.*" (P. L., XXII, 1214).—St. Leo the Great, *Serm.*

Bodily abstinence (*ieiunium corporale*) is a means of spiritual or perfect abstinence, as may be gathered from the liturgical prayers of the Church, who again and again during the Lenten season declares: "as we abstain from food in the body, so may we abstain from sin in the mind."

"Bridle gluttony," says Thomas à Kempis, "and thou shalt the more easily restrain all carnal inclinations."¹⁴

"At all times and every day during this our earthly life," observes St. Leo the Great, "fasting makes us stronger in combatting sin; it conquers the carnal inclinations, drives away temptations, curbs pride, softens anger, and aids the will in striving after virtue, provided that it is accompanied by benevolence and charity and wisely exercises itself in works of mercy."¹⁵

b) The *social value of fasting* consists not merely, nor even principally, in the substitution of almsgiving for abstention from food, but in supplementing that act of mortification by works of

XIX (al. XVIII), c. 2: "Quum universa vitia per continentiam destruantur, et quidquid avaritia sitit, quidquid superbia ambit, quidquid luxuria concupiscit, huius virtutis soliditate superetur: quis non intellegat, quantum nobis praesidium per ieiunia conferatur? In quibus indicitur, ut non solum a cibis, sed etiam ab omnibus carnalibus desideriis temperetur. Alioqui superfluum est suscipere esuriam et iniquam non deponere voluntatem, reciso affligi cibo et a concepto non resilire peccato. Carnale est, non spirituale ieiunium, ubi soli corpori non parcuritur, et in his quae omnibus deliciis nocentiora sunt, permanetur. Quid prodest animae foris agere quasi dominam et intus

servire captivam, membris propriis imperare et ius propriae libertatis amittere? Et merito plerumque patitur famulam rebellantem, quae non reddit Domino debitam servitutem. Ieiunante ergo corpore ab escis mens ieiunet a vitüs et curas cupiditatesque terrenas regis sui lege diiudicet." (P. L., LIV, 187).

¹⁴ *De Imit. Christi*, l. I, c. 19 (ed. Pohl, II, 34). Cfr. Stöhr-Kanamüller, *Handbuch der Pastoralmedizin*, 5th ed., pp. 530 sqq.; Antonelli, *Medicina Pastoralis*, Vol. II, 3rd ed., Rome 1909, pp. 487 sqq.

¹⁵ St. Leo the Great, *Serm.*, XV (al. XIV), c. 2 (Migne, P. L., LIV, 175).

corporal and spiritual mercy. Already in the *Shepherd of Hermas* the faithful were exhorted to give to the poor and needy what they saved by fasting.¹⁶ "*Fiat refectio pauperis abstinentia ieiunantis*," says St. Leo.¹⁷ The Church has always taught that fasting without almsgiving, *i. e.*, without the simultaneous exercise of charity, is an act of covetousness rather than of self-denial. "Let our fasting be rich in fruits of liberality," says Pope St. Leo, "and fertile in generous donations for Christ's poor. In this even those who are not wealthy should not grow careless, thinking that what they might be able to save would be but little. The Lord knows the ability of each and, seeing through everything in justice, knows how great or how small is the measure with which each one gives. Inequality of possessions prevents equality in giving, but in most cases the unequal gifts are equalized by merit, for the intention may be the same, even though the means differ."¹⁸

¹⁶ *Past. Herm.*, Simil. V, c. 3, 7 (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 534).

¹⁷ St. Leo the Great, *Serm.*, XIII, (al. XII), c. 1: "*Quia non solo ieiunio animarum nostrarum salus acquiritur, ieiunium nostrum misericordis pauperum suppleamus. Impendamus virtutis, quod subtrahimus voluptati. Fiat refectio pauperis abstinentia ieiunantis. Studiamus viduarum defensionem, pupillorum utilitati, lugentium consolationi, dis-*

sidentium paci. Suscipiatur peregrinus, adiuvetur oppressus, vestiatur nudus, foveatur aegrotus, ut quicumque nostrum de iustis laboribus auctori honorum omnium Deo sacrificium huius pietatis obtulerit, ab eodem regni coelestis praeonium percipere mereatur." (Migne, P. L., LIV, 172).

¹⁸ Cfr. St. Leo the Great, *Serm.*, XV (al. XIV), c. 2: "*Ieiunium enim sine elemosyna non tam purgatio animae quam carnis afflictio est,*

If the law of fasting and abstinence were obeyed in the right spirit by all, its enforcement would undoubtedly exercise a wholesome economic influence by causing men to use the good things of this earth with greater moderation and thereby preventing extreme and wide-spread poverty. The example of self-denial given by the rich would induce the poor to bear with greater patience and fortitude the privations imposed on them by bitter necessity. If the law of fasting oppresses the poor, instead of alleviating their lot by almsgiving and the decreased consumption of utilities, and still more, if it can be evaded by the rich through the use of substitutes or purchased dispensations, then it does not fulfil the social purpose for which it was imposed.

The Church expects the individual Christian, impelled by love and the spirit of penitence, to do more than the letter of the law commands. The rich man is in duty bound to give alms even aside

magisque ad avaritiam quam ad continentiam referendum est, quando aliquis sic a cibo abstinet, ut etiam a pietate ieiunet. Nostra ergo ieiunia, dilectissimi, abundant fructibus largitatis et in pauperes Christi benignis sint secunda muneribus. Nec tardentur in hoc opere medicos, quia parum sit, quod possint de sua facultate decerpere. Novit Dominus omnium vires et scit iustus inspector de qua mensura quisque quid tribuat. Dissimiles quidem substantiae similes erogationes ha-

bere non possunt, sed aequatur plerumque merito, quod distat impendio, quia potest esse par animus, etiam ubi impar est census."—*IDEM, Serm., XLIX (al. XLVIII), c. 6: "Apud summum Patrem, qui non fuerit in caritate fratrum, non habebitur in numero filiorum. In distributione quoque eleemosynarum et pauperum cura pinguescant christiana ieiunia, et quod suis quisque deliciis subtrahit, debilibus impendat et egenis."* (P. L., LIV, 175, 305).

from the requirements of the law of fasting, whereas the poor man is not required to give that which he saves by fasting to others who are no needier than he.¹⁹

To the evangelical commandment which bids us pray for those who persecute us,²⁰ the *Didaché* adds the exhortation to fast in their stead.²¹ This precept, which is mentioned nowhere else, is hardly to be interpreted in the sense of Hermas, who recommends that the food saved by fasting be given to the poor, or in the sense of the ninth beatitude which Origen says he read "in some book" and credits to the Apostles, namely, "Blessed is he that fasts in order to feed the poor." What the unknown author of the *Didaché* probably meant was that fasting is useful for strengthening the prayers a man offers for those who persecute him on account of his religion.²²

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 746 sq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 389 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 697 sq.—Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Past.*, Vol. II, pp. 631 sq.

¹⁹ Cfr. F. X. Linsenmann, *Lehrbuch der Moraltheologie*, pp. 338 sq.

²⁰ Matt. V, 44.

²¹ *Doctr. XII Apost.*, c. 1, 3: "Bless those that curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast

for those that persecute you." (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 4; Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Vol. I, p. 309).

²² Cfr. J. H. Kurtz, *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, Vol. I, 13th ed., Leipsic 1899, p. 179.

SECTION 2

THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL FAST

The subject-matter or content of the ecclesiastical law of fasting (*ieiunium ecclesiasticum*), or, in other words, the thing it commands, is twofold, viz.: (a) abstention from food both with regard to quantity and to quality (*ieiunium*, i. e., fasting proper) and (b) abstinence from certain kinds of food, particularly flesh meat (*abstinentia*), on certain prescribed days.

ARTICLE I

DAYS OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

I. The days of fasting and abstinence (*ieiunium cum abstinentia*, *ieiunium plenum*) are:

a) ASH WEDNESDAY AND THE FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS OF LENT.—This is a modification of the former law, which made all the days of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter, with the exception of Sundays, days of fasting and abstinence.¹

¹ F. X. Funk in *Kirchengeschichtliche Abhandlungen und Untersuchungen*, Vol. I, pp. 241 sqq.;

Kellner, *Heortology*, pp. 88 sqq.; Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 254 sqq.

The early Christians seem to have fasted on all Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year. This pious custom is mentioned in the *Didaché* ², in the *Shepherd of Hermas* ³, and in the writings of Tertullian.⁴ That fasting should form an essential feature of the commemoration of the Passion was indicated in Christ's words: "Can the children of the bridegroom mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast."⁵ The days when the Divine Bridegroom was taken away were held from the first to be those in which Jesus lay in the grave,—Good Friday and Holy Saturday. These days were nearly everywhere kept as obligatory fast-days of the strictest kind.⁶ About the middle of the third century in many places men fasted the entire Holy Week on water, bread, and salt, while on the last two days they ate nothing whatever. Soon the fast came to be extended over several weeks. In the fourth century the forty days' fast is a well-established institution. The fifth canon of the first Nicene Council mentions Lent as a common observance, though the Festal Letters of St. Athanasius bear witness that it was not yet kept everywhere. The fare on fast-days consisted of water and

² *Doctr. XII Apost.*, c. 8.

³ *Past. Herm.*, Simil. V, c. 1.

⁴ *De Ieiunio*, c. II, 10, 14.

⁵ *Matt. IX*, 15.

⁶ *Tertullian, op. cit.*, II, 13, 14.

broth made with flour, fruit, oil, and bread. The Lenten fast must have commenced on the Monday after Sexagesima.⁷

St. Leo the Great in his sermons explains the object and significance of the Lenten fast. He says Lent was appointed in order to prepare the souls of the faithful for a fruitful commemoration of the mystery of Easter.⁸ It was to be a time for purification and sanctification,—a time, first of all, for doing penance for past sins and breaking off sinful habits; a time also for the exercise of all virtues, especially almsgiving, and reconciliation. Fasting was to form only a part, though the most essential part, of this penitential preparation, and Leo declares it to be incumbent upon all, not only the clergy, but the laity as well. He regarded the forty days fast before Easter as an Apostolic institution.⁹ The term became fixed, no doubt for the reason that Jesus had fasted forty days in the desert.

Originally, it seems, the forty days' fast (*quadragesima*) was taken to mean the days before Easter as a whole, Sundays excluded. This gave for a period of six weeks only thirty-six fast-days, and, where Saturday was not kept, only thirty. To rectify this mistake, the number of actual fast-days was increased to forty, with the result that, in the West, the beginning of Lent (*caput ieiunii*) was put back four days. In the East, where only five days in each week were fast-days, it had to be put back still further. There Lent began eight weeks before Easter, and since the Saturdays (Holy

⁷ Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 261 sqq.

⁸ St. Leo, *Serm.*, XLVII (*al.* XLVI), c. 1; *Serm.*, XLIV (*al.* XLIII), c. 1 (Migne, *P. L.*, LIV, 294; 285; 287). Cfr. St. Thomas,

Summa Theol., 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 8, ad 3.

⁹ Kellner, *Heortology*, pp. 88 sqq., 94 sq.

Saturday excepted) were not fast-days, extended actually over forty-one days instead of forty. Abstinence from flesh meat began on the Monday after the eighth Sunday before Easter, corresponding to the Latin *dominica sexagesima*, which is called "the Sunday of Abstinence from Flesh Meat." From the following Sunday, called "the Sunday for Eating Cheese," milk products (*lactinia*) were forbidden.¹⁰

b) The EMBER DAYS are days of sacred fasts (*angariae*), dedicated to the Lord every three months, and corresponding to the four seasons of the year, from whence they derive their Latin name, *Quattuor Tempora*. The Ember tides are peculiar to the Western Church. In Rome they were observed from the earliest times, so that Leo the Great was inclined to regard them as of Apostolic origin. He connects them with the four seasons of the year¹¹ and says that during these days we should give due honor and praise to God for the gifts He bestows on us to support our bodily life, abstain from luxuries, and be generous to the poor. The Ember tides in general, especially that of December, St. Leo connects directly with *agriculture* and the *harvest*,¹² and the earliest liturgies contain prayers for a good crop.¹³ Dr. Kellner thinks that these indi-

¹⁰ Kellner, *Heortology*, pp. 95 sq.

¹¹ *Serm.*, XIX (al. XVIII), c. 2: "*Per totius anni circulum distributa sunt [ieiunia], ut lex abstinentiae omnibus sit adscripta temporibus.*"

¹² *Serm.*, XVI, c. 2: "*... ut omnium fructuum collectione conclusa,*" etc.

¹³ Morin quotes passages from the Leonine and Gelasian sacramentaries; see Migne, *P. L.*, LV, 153 sqq.

cations give us the clue to the origin of the Ember fasts, and says they were most likely heathen practices, which were taken over by the Church and given a Christian form and character.¹⁴

Pope Gelasius commanded that ordinations of priests and deacons should be held on all Ember tides and in the middle of Lent, whereas in St. Leo's time ordinations took place at Easter only.

In the earliest service books, the Ember fasts were called, respectively, *ieiunium primi, quarti, septimi et decimi mensis*, and fell in March, June, September, and December. It does not appear that the original object of the Ember days was to petition God to raise up worthy priests in His Church, for this purpose is not mentioned until after the popes had appointed the Ember days as fixed times for ordinations.¹⁵

For a long time it remained uncertain in which week of the months in question the Ember days should be observed. At Rome they were kept in the first week of the month.¹⁶ Elsewhere the practice differed, until Gregory VII¹⁷ put an end to all doubts and variations by establishing the present usage, which is as follows: Ember Days are the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the third Sunday of Advent (*ieiunium hiemale*); the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday of Lent (*ieiunium verum*), the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after Pentecost (*ieiunium aestivum*); the

¹⁴ *Heortology*, p. 184.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

¹⁷ *Micrologus*, c. 24; cfr. Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 234 sqq.

Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, which falls on the third Sunday in September (*ieiunium autumnale*). This arrangement may be remembered by means of the following verses:

*Post Luciam, cineres, post sanctum pneuma crucemque
Tempora dat quattuor feria quarta sequens.*

c) The VIGIL FASTS are those kept on the days preceding Pentecost, the Assumption of the B. V. Mary, All Saints, and Christmas.¹⁸

A vigil originally was the watch *vigilia* which used to be kept on the nights before important feasts. The practice of spending such nights in public prayer is at least as old as Christianity itself. Vigils are mentioned by Tertullian,¹⁹ and the Apostolic Constitutions²⁰ tell of one maintained till "cock-crow" on Holy Saturday. St. Jerome²¹ defends the custom against Vigilantius, admitting, however, that the watches were sometimes accompanied by gross immoralities. It was probably these and other abuses which led to the discontinuance of the practice.

The obligation of fasting on the vigils did not begin till later. Villien says it would be difficult to give the precise date of its origin.²² Perhaps the linking of the fast with the vigil is an extension of the ancient fast by which

18 C. I. C., can. 1252, § 2.

19 *Ad Uxorem*, II, 5.

20 *Const. Apost.*, V, 10.

21 *Epist.*, CIX; *Adv. Vigilant.*, n. 9.

22 *History of the Commandments of the Church*, p. 236.

the faithful prepared themselves for the celebration of Easter. Both the discipline of the watch and the motive of the fast are indicated in a synodal decree of Auxerre, adopted in the last third of the sixth century. The principal object of the vigil, says this decree, is prayer in preparation for the approaching feast; the fast is its necessary accompaniment, so to speak. The fast is observed because the watch is kept in church and to enable the faithful to communicate at Mass.²³

For quite a while the tendency was to increase the number of vigils on which fasting was obligatory. Besides the vigils of Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, and the Assumption, there were those for most of the feasts of the Apostles.²⁴ To them custom or episcopal constitutions in course of time added other diocesan or provincial vigils. It is likely that the feast of the patron saint was everywhere preceded by a vigil. To the feasts of the Apostles were ultimately added those of St. Lawrence, and St. John the Baptist, and, in the Frankish countries, that of St. Martin of Tours.

Of late the tendency has been rather to diminish the vigils. In the United States only four were observed (before Christmas, Pentecost, the Assumption, and All Saints) the same that have now been made universal by the New Code.²⁵

2. The law of abstinence from flesh meat (*abstinencia, ieiunium semiplenum*) obliges on all *Fridays* of the year except when Christmas or some other holyday of obligation falls on that day.²⁶

²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

²⁴ *Op. cit.*, 247.

²⁵ C. I. C., Can. 1252, § 2.

²⁶ C. I. C., can., 1252, § 1.

Formerly Wednesday and Friday were widely observed as days of fasting and abstinence in commemoration of the death and burial of Christ. Regino of Prüm inserted into his canonical collection a text of Rufinus, which says that the fasts of Wednesday and Friday must not be dispensed with except in case of grave necessity,—Wednesday, because it is the day on which Judas decided to betray our Lord; Friday, because on that day Christ was crucified.²⁷

Later the practice declined. Fagnani, following the teaching of Innocent IV, affirms that, according to the common opinion, the Friday fast is merely of counsel, not of precept, like abstinence from flesh meat on Wednesday.²⁸

The discipline of the *Saturday abstinence*, outside of Lent, which survived in some countries until the promulgation of the New Code, began in the West at a comparatively late date.²⁹ The Code marks its end.

Abstinence from flesh meat on Friday is obligatory upon all Catholics who are not excused by sickness, by the nature of their work, or by a dispensation, as granted, *e. g.*, in the "Bula de Cruzada."³⁰

READINGS.—St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 5 sqq.—St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 1004 sqq. (ed. Gaudé, II, 384 sqq.).—A. Linsenmayer, *Entwicklung der Kirchl. Fasten-*

²⁷ *De Eccl. Disc.*, Append. I, c. xvii; Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

²⁸ *In c. "Consilium,"* n. 23; Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

²⁹ Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

³⁰ For an account of the privileges of the *Bulla Cruciatæ* see Fer-

reres, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 771 sqq. and the same author's book, *La Nueva Bula de Cruzada Española y suas Extraordinarios Privilegios*, 3rd ed., Madrid 1915.

disziplin, Munich 1877.—F. X. Funk “*Die Entwicklung des Osterfastens*” in *Kirchengeschichtliche Abhandlungen und Untersuchungen*, Vol. I, pp. 241 sqq.—V. Ermoni, *Le Carême*, 2nd ed., Paris 1907.—K. A. H. Kellner, *Heortology*, London 1908, pp. 88 sqq.—G. Berthelet, *Traité Historique et Morale de l’Abstinence*, Rouen 1731.

ARTICLE 2

IN WHAT FASTING AND ABSTINENCE CONSISTS

1. The law of fasting (*ieiunium plenum*) involves three points.

a) With regard to *quantity*, it permits but one full meal a day (*unica per diem comestio*).¹

The taking of but one full meal a day constitutes the essence of the strict fast. Were one to take several meals a day he could not be said to be fasting.

However, the law of fasting does not forbid the taking of some food in the morning and again in the evening, provided approved local custom be observed with regard to the quantity and quality of the food taken.² Legitimate custom permits a collation (*collatio vespertina*) in the evening and a light breakfast (*frustulum matutinum, ientaculum*) in the morning. The noon and evening meals, *i. e.*, the *prandium* and the *collatio*, may be reversed *ad libitum*.³

The fast is not broken by liquids which, *per se*,

¹ C. I. C., can. 1251, § 1.

² C. I. C., Can. 1251, § 1.

³ C. I. C., Can. 1251, § 2.

serve to satisfy thirst rather than hunger; but to consume excessive quantities of liquids, or to drink with a view to circumvent the law (*in fraudem legis*) would be sinful and contrary to the mind of the Church.⁴

The moralists are not agreed as to what constitutes a *collation*. Some permit the fourth part of an ordinary meal, whereas others allow but three or four ounces of food. St. Alphonsus⁵ permits from eight to ten ounces (an ounce being equal to thirty grains). To us it seems that no definite and universal rule can be set up in a matter of this kind, where so much depends on climate, temperament, physical constitution, and other factors, which vary in different persons and regions.⁶ Some men ordinarily eat two and three times as much as others and naturally find it more difficult to keep the fast. St. Thomas says: "The quantity of food can-

4 J. B. Gury, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 507: "*Ieiunium non frangitur haustu aquae, vini aliarumque potionum, quae de se ordinantur et communiter adhibentur ad sitim sedandam, quamvis iuxta primam ecclesiae disciplinam christiani a vino et a similibus liquoribus prorsus abnuerint. Hinc axioma: Liquidum non frangit ieiunium. Per liquidum autem id solum intellegitur, quod ex communi usu sumitur per modum potus, non vero per modum cibi, ut lac,*" etc.—Cfr. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, 2a 2ae, qu. 147, art. 6, ad 2: "*Istud [ieiunium ecclesiae] non solvitur nisi per ea, quae ecclesia interdicere tendit instituendo ieiunium. Non autem intendit ecclesia interdicere abstinentiam potus, qui magis sumitur ad alterationem corporis et digestionem ci-*

borum assumptorum, quam ad nutritionem, licet aliquo modo nutriat, et ideo licet pluries ieiunantibus bibere. Si autem quis immoderate potu utatur, potest peccare et meritum ieiunii perdere, sicut etiam si immoderate cibum in una commestione assumat."—IDEM, *ibid.*, ad 3: "*Electuaria, etiamsi aliquando nutrant, non tamen principaliter assumuntur ad nutrimentum, sed ad digestionem ciborum. Unde non solvunt ieiunium sicut nec aliarum medicinarum assumptio, nisi forte aliquis in fraudem electuaria in magna quantitate assumat per modum cibi.*"—IDEM, *Comment. in Sent.*, IV, dist. 15, qu. 3, ad 4, dub. 1, n. 17.

5 *Theol. Mor.*, l. III, n. 1025 (ed. Gaudé, II, 405).

6 Cfr. A. Koch, "*Zur kasuistischen*

not be the same for all men because of the difference of bodily constitution, on account of which one needs more food than another.”⁷

The duration of the time for which fasting is prescribed must also be taken into consideration, and consequently a larger collation is permitted in Lent than on Vigils or Ember days.

As regards the *amount of food* permitted for the collation, those who are obliged to fast may eat as much as they deem necessary to enable them to fulfil their obligations, with due regard to bodily infirmity, exhaustion, and the nature of their work. No doubt, other things being equal, a priest who ministers to the spiritual needs of a large congregation may, even without a dispensation, take more food than one who works but little.⁸ To fasting, too, may be applied the words of St. Paul: “Who also hath made us fit ministers of the New Testament, not in the letter, but in the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth.”⁹ In this sense a recent author justly observes: “As regards fasting we must be guided not only by the letter, but also by the spirit of the law, and beware against scrupulously weighing the amount of food permitted as well as against adopting the superficial view of those who put all the emphasis on the spirit and neglect the letter. The law should be observed *both in letter and in spirit*. As the letter killeth without the spirit, so the spirit departeth where obedience is not practiced.”¹⁰

Behandlung des Fastengebotes” in the *Theologische Quartalschrift*, Tübingen 1904, pp. 60 sqq.

⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁸ Cfr. Th. M. J. Gousset and J. N. P. Oischinger, *Moraltheologie*,

Vol. I, Schaffhausen 1851, pp. 126 sq.

⁹ 2 Cor. III., 6.

¹⁰ J. Schmid, *Lehrbuch der kath. Moraltheologie*, 2nd ed., Ratisbon 1872, p. 362.

The interpretation and application of the law of fasting must be based upon the teaching of the *Didaché*: "Concerning food, bear what thou canst,"¹¹ which, according to the common interpretation, means that every Christian should practice abstinence according to his ability and the circumstances under which he lives.¹²

It would be a useful undertaking, says Bishop Linsenmann, to determine the duration of the principal meal, the measure of the collation permitted, and the limits of the *parvitas materiae*; but it is impossible because the conditions of living and nutrition differ so greatly from house to house and from country to country. It would be too materialistic to gauge the value of different foods solely by the percentage of nourishment they contain. Eating is not merely the taking in of food, and fasting means something more than to endure hunger.¹³

To prevent misunderstanding, however, it is well to add that the speculations of casuists to determine the exact quantity of food permitted to those who are obliged to fast, if intended to serve not as a legal norm, but as a guide to the correct interpretation of the law, are unobjectionable, nay, may prove decidedly useful.¹⁴

b) In regard to the *quality* of food, the law prescribes abstinence from flesh meat. Formerly the Church was much more exacting. The law

¹¹ *Doctr. XII Apost.*, VI, 3 (Funk, *Patr. Apost.*, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 16; Lake, *The Apost. Fathers*, I, 319).

¹² K. Böckenhoff, *Das apostolische Speisegesetz*, pp. 22 sq.

¹³ Linsenmann, *Lehrb. der Moraltheologie*, pp. 384 sq.

¹⁴ A. Koch in the *Theol. Quartalschrift*, Tübingen 1904, pp. 60 sqq.

of abstinence originally seems to have comprised all food-stuffs ministering to the maintenance of vigor. The so-called Apostolic Constitutions and the *Didaché* limit the Lenten diet to bread, salt, vegetables, and water. In course of time the pristine severity was relaxed. From the fifteenth century on, general indults were more frequently granted, and in the second half of the nineteenth century they were extended to almost every country.¹⁵ The New Code abolishes the so-called *maigre strict* by defining that "the law of abstinence forbids the eating of flesh meat and meat juice, but not of eggs, nor of milk products (*lacticinia*) and whatever condiments, even those made from the fat of animals."¹⁶ This is a noteworthy departure from the ancient discipline, for many are the texts to show that the prohibition of flesh meat and of meat juice, blood, and grease always went hand in hand. On this point, too, as on others, the *pia mater Ecclesia* saw fit to introduce mitigations into her discipline at a comparatively early date. "For many centuries," says Villien, "flesh meat and its by-products, juice, lard, and grease, have been differently treated. Many are the minute discussions of theologians on this matter; the most divergent opinions appealed to custom, until at last the

¹⁵ Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 309 sq.

¹⁶ C. I. C., can. 1250.

Church restored peace and calm of conscience by many gracious indults." Canon 1250 completes the development.¹⁷

As for *milk* and *eggs*, they were excluded from the *cibi quadragesimales* until the ninth century, when a very sensible relaxation was made. A council of Angers (1365) tolerated the use of milk and butter in regions where fish and oil could not be easily obtained. While the great bulk of Christians still continued more or less faithfully to observe the prescribed abstinence from eggs and milk, at least in Lent, means were found to obtain legitimate dispensation for many. When, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the respective indults were extended almost throughout the Church, exemption was made in the case of butter and milk, not only for the principal meal, but also for the collation.

In regard to the quantity and quality of the food allowed for the collation, even under the New Code, local custom is decisive.¹⁸ The ancient prohibition of flesh meat and fish at the same meal (*in eadem refectiōe*) no longer exists.¹⁹

¹⁷ Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

¹⁸ C. I. C., can. 1251, § 1.

¹⁹ C. I. C., can. 1251, § 2.—A marked distinction was made as early as the fifth century, in point of view of abstinence, between the flesh of fish and that of other animals. The reason for this differ-

ence was found in the mystical order. "The use of flesh and wine," says St. Isidore of Seville, "was granted to man only after the deluge, and Jesus Christ said by the mouth of His Apostle: 'It is good not to eat flesh and not to drink wine, and to be satisfied

The distinction made between different foods from the point of view of fasting and abstinence, is based on the assumption that the forbidden foods contain more nourishment than the others and consequently heat the blood and incite the sensual inclinations more strongly than the so-called Lenten foods. This consideration also explains why the laws of the Church attribute greater importance to the act of abstention itself (*continentia*) than to the kinds of food upon which it is exercised (*abstinentia*) and why liquid beverages, as such, are not forbidden.²⁰ Modern physiologists agree with their brethren of a by-gone age that liquids, particularly spirituous liquors, contain but little nutriment, and therefore cannot be regarded as a substitute for solid food, except in a secondary sense, namely in so far as they aid in the assimilation of the coarser Lenten foods and render the pangs of hunger less acute. Consequently, the mild practice of the Church in regard to beverages does not run counter to the spirit of the law, provided, of course, that liquors are not used to excess, either absolutely or relatively, because they incite to sensuality.

The Council of Baltimore and many diocesan regula-

with vegetables.' But since our Lord Himself used fish after His resurrection, we can eat of it, for neither the Saviour nor the Apostles have subsequently forbidden it." (*De Eccles. Offic.*, l. I, c. xiv; Migne, *P.L.*, LXXXIII, 777). On the strength of this reasoning the use of fish on fast-days and during Lent was formally permitted. The only point in doubt for some time was whether fish could be eaten at the collation. Would not this food give to the collation the character of a true meal? Under the influence of this consideration the first

moralists who permitted the use of fish for the collation, allowed only small fish, because their delicate flesh was considered as less nourishing. However, the distinction was too fine not to succumb to practice. To-day most moralists admit that the flesh of large fish taken in small quantities at the collation is no more opposed to the observance of fasting than the same quantity of small-sized fish. (Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 311 sq.).

20 "*Liquidum non frangit ieiunium.*"

tions counsel abstention from spirituous liquors where observance of the fast is impossible.

Besides liquid beverages (*liquida*) properly so called (water, wine, beer), there are the *semiliquida*, such as tea, coffee, chocolate, and what Italians call *sorbetti*, i. e., lemonade, fruit ices, etc. Most authors regard the latter as permissible because they are taken for their refreshing rather than for their nourishing qualities. The case is different with the *fruits* themselves, which are generally regarded as food.

The distinction between warm-blooded and cold-blooded animals offers some difficulty. Fish, oysters, turtles, crabs, are not forbidden, and in some countries other animals which have some connection with water, are allowed.²¹

In determining the quantity of food which constitutes *materia gravis*, moralists vary. Noldin estimates it at more than four ounces (120 grains), regardless of whether this quantity is consumed at one sitting or at different times in the course of a day, because several light lunches taken during the day coalesce into a full meal and thus constitute *materia gravis*, as is evident from proposition number 29 condemned by Alexander VII. According to this view, therefore, a sin is committed not only by taking more than one meal, but likewise by taking more than four ounces of food, either at breakfast, or at the evening collation, or at any other time of the day outside the principal meal.²²

²¹ Sabetti-Barrett, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, p. 318.

²² Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 698.

What about the practice of taking a bite of solid food with a drink in order to prevent possible harmful effects ("ne noceat potus")? Diana, Leander, and other authors regard this practice as permissible, but Ferreres observes that it cannot be allowed unreservedly because frequent snatches of food (*toties quoties*) would render the law of fasting nugatory and an object of mockery. But it is permissible to take a bite once or twice a day.²³

c) The *unica comestio*, i. e., the full meal allowed once every twenty-four hours on days of fasting and abstinence, is commonly taken after twelve o'clock. Though it should not be eaten until about noon²⁴ no definite hour is prescribed. The *collation* is usually taken in the evening, but for any good reason may be taken in the morning and the *ientaculum* postponed till evening.²⁵ The chief point to be kept in mind is that fasting essentially consists in taking but one full meal a day.

The mitigation of the ancient law in favor of a collation resulted from the increase of agricultural and industrial workers among the faithful. The full meal, which was originally taken at sundown, was now frequently served at noon, and this made it necessary to permit a light luncheon in the evening.

The custom of consuming a little dry bread with tea, coffee, or chocolate in the morning (*ientaculum*) and the

²³ Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, p. 395; cfr. St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, n. 1018.

²⁴ "*Circa meridiem.*"
²⁵ C. I. C., can. 1251, § 2.

occasional eating of a small quantity of food with liquid beverages, was long frowned upon by the ecclesiastical authorities, and they finally permitted it only out of consideration for those whom a weak constitution or poor health did not permit to fast rigorously. Now it has become a privilege granted to all.

2. The law of *abstinence* (*abstinentia sine ieiunio*) forbids the use of flesh meat and meat juice on all Fridays of the year, except when Friday coincides with a holyday of obligation.²⁶

In the olden time, abstinence, extended to a number of other foods besides flesh meat,²⁷ was deemed not only an effective means of mortification, but suitable for purifying the soul and keeping it free from sin.²⁸

Flesh and wine were considered impure by the Gnostics and Manichaeans. Against these heretics the Church maintained that, in the words of our Divine Saviour, "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but what cometh out of the mouth,"²⁹ and, in the words of St. Paul, "every creature of God is good, and nothing [is] to be rejected that is received with thanksgiving."³⁰ She vigorously combatted the false asceticism of the above-mentioned sects, which was based on the belief that flesh meat and wine are bad in themselves because they are produced by

²⁶ *V. supra*, Art. 1, no. 2.

²⁷ *Supra*, p. 370.

²⁸ Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, p. 301.

²⁹ Matt. XV, 11; cfr. Mark VII,

15.

³⁰ 1 Tim. IV, 4.

a Bad Principle. That the laws of abstinence were not the result of superstition or error is plain from the fact that they originated with the Apostles, who, at the Council of Jerusalem, commanded the faithful to abstain from "things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled." ³¹

The saying of our Lord, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man," etc., has often been adduced as an argument against the ecclesiastical law of abstinence. This is a mistake. It is not the eating of forbidden food, as such, that is sinful, but the spirit of disobedience or gluttony or impenitence that inspires the act. "I do not fear the uncleanness of the food," says St. Augustine, "but the unclean cupidity."

Another Scriptural passage that is sometimes alleged against the law of abstinence is 1 Cor. X, 25-28, to wit: "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat; asking no question for conscience's sake. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. If any of them that believe not invite you, and you be willing to go; eat of anything that is set before you, asking no question for conscience's sake. But if any man say: This has been sacrificed to idols, do not eat of it for his sake that told it, and for conscience's sake." The passage is somewhat obscure, but its meaning seems to be that the eating of meat that was offered as a sacrifice to idols is not sinful *per se*, because it does not necessarily entail a participation in heathen worship. Where such participation is involved, however, and scandal is given to others, it is forbidden to eat the meat. ³²

³¹ Acts XV, 28 sq.

³² Cfr. J. McRory, *The Epistles*

of St. Paul to the Corinthians,
Dublin 1915, pp. 150 sqq.

SECTION 3

OBLIGATION OF THE LAW OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

1. The law of fasting proper (*ieiunium*) binds the faithful only after they have attained the age of twenty-one and until the beginning of the sixtieth year.¹ This law renders it grievously sinful not only to take more than one full meal a day, but also to take small quantities of food at frequent intervals, so that the total amount is considerable (say, four ounces).

When one who is obliged to fast has taken two full meals, he has broken the fast, and the law of fasting no longer binds him; whereas the precept of abstinence may be broken again and again, and a new sin is committed every time the forbidden act is repeated.

Many who are *per se* bound to fast are excused by virtue of a dispensation, or on the ground of inability (*impotentia*), or because they are engaged in important work (*labor*), which cannot be omitted without serious inconvenience and to do which they need ample nourishment, or because

¹ C. I. C., can. 1254, § 2.

they would be hindered in their works of piety (*pietas*) if they fasted.

a) A dispensation, to be valid, must be based upon a truthful statement of the case. If the reason for which the dispensation is asked, is certain and undeniable, no express permission is required, particularly if legitimate custom can be adduced or there is difficulty in reaching the competent superior. Confessors and physicians can declare that there is sufficient reason in this or that case to exempt one from the law, but they have no power *per se* to dispense.

Dispensations from fasting as well as abstinence may be obtained for any good reason from the bishop, or the pastor, or some other priest having ordinary, quasi-ordinary, or delegated jurisdiction.

Those who are dispensed from fasting are not *eo ipso* dispensed from keeping the law of abstinence.

b) Inability to fast may be physical or moral. It excuses the sick, convalescents, pregnant and nursing women, all who are in delicate health, the poor who cannot obtain enough food at any time to eat a full meal, as well as those who are obliged to perform hard bodily labor in fields, mines or workshops, or severe mental work, such as teaching, frequent preaching or hearing confessions; also physicians, judges, travellers (un-

der certain circumstances), and those whom fasting would hinder in the performance of pious and charitable works. The Church imposes fasting and abstinence as a means of furthering good works, and therefore does not wish this law to stand in the way of anything that is better or more necessary.

The exception made in favor of those who are under twenty-one or over sixty, is based on the fact that the very young as well as those advanced in years require more frequent nourishment, the former because they are still in process of physical development, the latter because they are usually weak and infirm. The exemption is general because laws are made for the generality of men, not for those who are exceptionally situated.

Some moralists hold that women are *probabiliter* exempt from fasting at the age of fifty, as they age more rapidly than men, and usually take less food—a view which, *in praxi*, would seem to justify certain mitigations.

2. The law of abstinence binds all Catholics who have completed their seventh year, except those who are duly excused.

This law binds *per se* under pain of mortal sin because its matter is objectively important; but it admits of *parvitas materiae*.

One is exempt from keeping the law of abstinence by a valid dispensation or by inability to live up to the Church's command. This exemption applies to the poor who have no choice of foods, to all who cannot sufficiently regain their

strength without the use of flesh meat, to the sick and convalescent, to those who are in delicate health and cannot digest Lenten foods, to those who are dependent upon others for the preparation of their meals, (*e. g.*, travellers, soldiers, servants, apprentices, etc.) But those so exempted should substitute for fasting some other work of penance or mortification to show their willingness to obey the law.²

The *United States* has been favored with three separate *indults* regarding the law of abstinence.

a) The first, called the *Quadragesimal Indult*, permitted the faithful to continue, or, more strictly, said they need not be prevented from continuing, the practice of eating eggs, milk, butter, etc., at the collation in Lent, and permitted the use of drippings and of flesh meat on Holy Thursday.

b) The second indult permitted *soldiers and sailors* in actual service to eat flesh meat on any day of the year except Ash Wednesday, the vigils of Christmas and of the feast of the Assumption, and the last three days of Lent. Holy Saturday afternoon has since been exempted by the New Code.³ This privilege extends also to the *families* of soldiers and sailors, while living with them, but not if they live apart.

c) The third indult was granted in favor of *working-men*. It gives each bishop the faculty to permit workmen and their families the use of flesh meat on all days of abstinence, except Fridays, Ash Wednesday, the last week in Lent, and the vigil of Christmas. This indult

² Cfr. Thos. Slater, S. J., *Manual of Moral Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 575.

³ C. I. C., can. 1252, § 4.

even permits flesh meat to be used more than once a day by those who are not bound to fast, but its application is left to the discretion of the Ordinary. Many bishops in the exercise of this faculty do not permit the use of flesh meat more than once a day even to those who are excused from fasting.

The question who are *operarii* in the sense of the indult is controverted. Fr. Michael Martin, S.J., who contributed the notes on American legislation to Slater's *Manual of Moral Theology*, says on this point: "Does it [the term *operarii*] mean only those who are usually designated by the English word *workingmen*, i.e., general laborers, mechanics, etc., or does it include also those engaged in the liberal professions, physicians, lawyers, etc.? Sabetti holds the former view, arguing from the intention of those who petitioned for the faculty and from the purpose of the concession itself. The other opinion is defended by a writer in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, Vol. XIII, pp. 295 sqq., where he says: 'Under the term working people (*operarii*) seem here to be included all classes of people who cannot observe the abstinence laws on account of the labor they are obliged to perform, whatever may be the character of that labor. *Lex non distinguit.*' This second interpretation may, it seems, be followed so long as there is no decision of the Holy See restricting the meaning of the word *operarii*. While the intention of the archbishops in presenting the petition was very probably limited to those who are usually called working people, and while the Holy See is to be presumed to grant the petition according to the mind of the petitioners (the archbishops of the United States), still the word *operarii* employed in the response of the Sacred Congregation is frequently taken to signify others besides working people. When, however, in the

Lenten regulations, which usually make reference to this indult, the bishop employs the term *workingmen* or *working people*, he would seem to indicate his intention that the privilege could be used only by those commonly designated by the term, and not by others who might be included under the word *operarii*. From the words of the indult itself it is manifest that a bishop has authority to make such a limitation, even if *operarii* be capable of bearing a wider meaning. It may be noted that, in order to share in this indult, it is sufficient that any member of the family, male or female, belong to the class in whose favor the bishop may extend the faculty.”⁴

READINGS.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 697 sqq.—Th. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 566 sqq.—A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. II, pp. 633 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 393 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 326 sqq.

⁴ Slater, *Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 571 sq.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRECEPT OF ANNUAL CONFESSION AND COMMUNION

We have adverted to the ecclesiastical precept of annual confession and Easter Communion in Volume II of this Handbook. The importance of the matter justifies the insertion of an extra chapter on the subject here. We shall treat of it in two Sections: (1) The Annual Confession; (2) The Easter Communion.

SECTION I

THE ANNUAL CONFESSION

1. The precept of annual confession is stated in the New Code of Canon Law as follows: "Every Catholic of either sex, after having arrived at the years of discretion, that is, after having attained the use of reason, is bound to confess all his sins truthfully at least once a year."¹

a) The *subject* of this law is *omnis utriusque sexus fidelis, i. e.*, every baptized Catholic who has arrived at the age of discretion. The age of discretion, as the law itself explains, is that at which a child begins to use his reason, *i. e.*, about the seventh year. Pastors are consequently obliged to prepare the children entrusted to their care for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, hear their confession, and give them absolution if they have committed a mortal sin, when they approach their seventh year, nay, even earlier if they enjoy the use of reason before that age.² Pope Pius X, in his famous decree "*Quam singulari*," condemns the custom of not admitting children to confession, or not absolving

¹ C. I. C., can. 906.

² Cfr. A. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Moralis et Pastoralis*, Vol. I, p. 29.

them, when they have arrived at the age of discretion.³

b) The *object* of this precept is stated in the phrase, "*omnia peccata sua.*" It is the common opinion of theologians that this law affects only those who have fallen into mortal sin, as there is no precept, human or divine, which makes it obligatory to confess venial sins. The divine law does not impose this obligation, as the Council of Trent explains,⁴ and the Lateran law, transcribed by the Code, merely determines the divine law.⁵ Hence a Catholic who has committed no mortal sin in the course of a year is not strictly bound to go to confession. It is advisable, however, that those too, who are conscious of venial sins only, go to confession at least once a year, lest, deprived of the grace of the Sacrament of Penance, they fall more easily into mortal sin.⁶

Some theologians hold that the precept of annual confession is not satisfied by confessing venial sins only and that, therefore, if one has gone to confession, say, at the beginning of the year, or of the paschal season, with none but venial sins, and afterwards, before the end of the year, has had the misfortune of falling into a mortal sin, he is obliged to go again, in order to comply with the law of the Church. Others (Palau, Victor, Reginald, Coninck, Laymann, Bonacina, Ballerini, Génicot, Tan-

³ "*Quam singulari,*" Aug. 8, 1910;
cfr. J. B. Ferreres, S. J., *The Decree on Daily Communion*, tr. by
H. Jimenez, S.J., London, 1909.

⁴ *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. XIV, c. 5.
⁵ Slater, *Manual of Moral Theol.*,
Vol. I, pp. 576 sq.

⁶ Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, I, 29.

querey, etc.) hold that the ecclesiastical precept is fulfilled by any valid confession. In practice, therefore, it will be prudent to advise, but not to compel, penitents to make another confession.⁷

c) The *manner* in which the faithful should confess their sins is described by the word "*fideliter*," which means that the confession must not be voluntarily invalid. "He who makes a sacrilegious or voluntarily invalid confession does not satisfy the law."⁸ Voluntarily to make an invalid confession is to commit a sacrilege, and the law of the Church cannot be satisfied by a sacrilege.⁹

d) The frequency with which confession should be made is determined by the words, "*saltem semel in anno*." The year within which the obligation must be complied with may be reckoned variously, *e.g.*, from Easter to Easter, or from one confession to the next, or from the first of January to the thirty-first of December.¹⁰ However, as the Easter time is expressly assigned for the annual Communion, the two precepts are in practice generally fulfilled together within the time appointed for the Easter duty.¹¹

Hence one who in the beginning of the year foresees that he will probably not be able to go to confession

⁷ *Op. cit.*, I, 30.

⁸ C. I. C., can. 907.

⁹ Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. I, p. 30.

¹⁰ Cfr. J. B. Ferreres, S. J., *Com-*

pend. Theol. Mor., Vol. I, p. 386;

J. Bucceroni, *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, n. 1558.

¹¹ Cfr. Slater, *Manual of Moral Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 577.

before the year ends, if conscious of mortal sin, must receive the Sacrament of Penance when the opportunity presents itself; for as the precept obliges "once a year," it must be satisfied when it is morally possible to do so.

One who is conscious of mortal sin, but has neglected to go to confession during the prescribed period, must do so as soon as the opportunity presents itself, because the law assigns the time for satisfying the obligation *ad determinandam*, not *ad finiendam obligationem*. This is the opinion of most theologians, though a few eminent authors hold that the obligation ceases when the time appointed for its fulfilment has expired.¹² No difficulty is likely to arise on this head, however, as St. Alphonsus teaches¹³ that one who has neglected the duty of annual confession one year, and comes to confession the next, accusing himself of the mortal sins he has committed in both years, satisfies his duty and is not, therefore, bound to confess twice, and the penitent, whether he knows of the theological discussion or not, will not consider himself guilty of a multiplication of sins for not having confessed *quam primum* or whenever an opportunity offered after the year had elapsed.

e) According to the present discipline it is no longer necessary to make the annual confession to one's pastor, or to some priest authorized by him, for the Code says: "Every Catholic is free to confess his sins to any legitimately approved confessor, even of a different rite, as he may prefer."¹⁴

¹² Cfr. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. I, p. 30.

¹³ *Theol. Mor.*, n. 669.

¹⁴ *C. I. C.*, can. 905.

f) A few historical notes on the precept of annual confession may be welcome. The canon "*omnis utriusque sexus*" of the fourth Lateran Council (1215), which has been received into the new Code, is the first universal law imposing annual confession in the Latin Church. It was preceded by many particular or local laws, which made the practice all but general throughout the West several centuries before that council was held. How far back the origin of this discipline goes cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. In the early days of Christianity the faithful probably went to confession only when they had committed "grave and mortal sins,"—sins of which St. Augustine says that, unlike the daily faults which God Himself pardons, they can be ordinarily remitted only through the power of the keys.¹⁵ A synodal statute of Rheims (perhaps of the seventh century) designates Lent as the time of the year when the pastor should hear the confessions of his people. But the authenticity of this law is doubtful. Towards the middle of the eighth century annual confession appears to have been a common practice.¹⁶ Later it became customary to go to confession three times a year,¹⁷ and laws to this effect were passed in various dioceses.¹⁸ But they were poorly observed. In 1215, the fourth Lateran Council finally issued its twenty-first canon, which still governs ecclesiastical discipline on this point.¹⁹

READINGS.—Ths. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 576 sq.—Ad. Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theol. Mor. et Pastor.*, Vol. I, pp. 27 sqq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*,

¹⁵ *Serm.*, 278 (Migne, *P.L.*, XXXVIII, 2273 sqq.)

¹⁶ Cfr. A. Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, p. 158.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 162 sqq.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 166.

¹⁹ Text of the whole canon in the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, l. V, tit. xxxviii; analysis in Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 167 sqq.

Vol. II, pp. 713 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 386 sq.—A. Lehmkuhl, S.J., *Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 838 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 328 sqq.

On the history of the precept see A. Villien, *A History of the Commandments of the Church* (English tr.), St. Louis, 1915, pp. 151-188.

SECTION 2

THE EASTER COMMUNION

1. The precept of the Easter Communion is formulated as follows in the new Code of Canon Law: "Every Catholic of either sex, who has reached the age of discretion, that is, attained the use of reason, must receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist once a year, at least during Easter time, unless he should deem it his duty to abstain therefrom temporarily on the advice of his pastor and for some reasonable cause."¹

This precept is divine so far as its substance is concerned, but purely ecclesiastical in regard to the time appointed for its fulfilment. In other words, it is a divine commandment to receive the Body of Christ, aye, to receive it frequently as a nourishment of the soul; and an ecclesiastical precept to receive it at least once a year during Easter time.

2. The *time* within which the Easter Communion must be made, is the paschal season, which is reckoned from Palm Sunday to Whit-Sunday, but may be prolonged by the diocesan

¹ C. I. C., can. 859, § 1; cfr. P. Chas. Augustine's *Commentary*, Vol. IV, pp. 237 sqq.

Ordinaries so as to embrace the period from Laetare to Trinity Sunday.² In this country the bishops still enjoy the privilege of extending the time to the first Sunday in Lent. (See Appendix, p. 418.)

This precept is a grave one, both in itself and with regard to the time appointed for its fulfilment, and hence a Catholic who culpably neglects to receive holy Communion within the Easter season, commits a sin which is *per se* mortal.

The determination of the time within which this precept must be fulfilled was made not *ad finiendam*, but *ad urgendam obligationem*; consequently, if one has not received holy Communion during the paschal season, he is bound to do so afterwards, though it is not necessary that he do so as soon as he can;³ for, as De Lugo observes, "when the paschal Communion is impossible, all that remains is the precept to communicate once a year, which can be satisfied at any time."⁴

No one is bound to fulfil this precept as long as the paschal season has not yet commenced, even though he may foresee that he will be prevented from making his Easter duty later. But if the paschal season has commenced, he is bound to communicate as soon as possible in case he anticipates an impediment, nay, to remove the impediment, even though it be grave (because the precept is divine and grave), and he should, therefore, communicate once more during the Easter season if he can, even though he has done so already by anticipation.⁵

One who has received holy Communion during the

² C. I. C., can. 859, § 2.

³ C. I. C., can. 859, § 4.

⁴ De Lugo, *De Euch.*, disp. XVI,

n. 69. Cfr. Noldin, *Summa Theol.*

Mor., Vol. II, p. 717. Others take

a stricter view.

⁵ Cfr. C. I. C., can. 861,

paschal season as viaticum (*per modum viatici*), has complied with his Easter duty and need not go to Communion again because the intention to fulfill the law is not required by the law.

This precept is not satisfied by a sacriligious communion.

3. The *place* where the Easter Communion should be received is one's parish church; those who comply with their Easter duty in some other parish are advised to notify their pastor of the fact.⁶ There is no longer a strict command, therefore, to communicate in one's parish church.

Can. 859, § 3 says: "who satisfies the precept in some other *parish*." This seems to make it obligatory to receive the Easter Communion either in one's own or in some other *parish* church, to the exclusion of churches that are not strictly parochial, and of public oratories. However, in Fr. Ferreres' opinion, this is not the mind of the legislator. "As there is no obligation, but merely a counsel to receive the Easter Communion in one's own parish," he says, "there can, *a fortiori*, be no obligation to receive it in some other parish church."⁷

4. The question *at what age children should be admitted to first Communion* has given rise to many controversies and considerable differences in practice. The matter was definitely decided by a decree of the S. C. of the Sacraments, Aug. 10, 1910, which says that children should be ad-

⁶ C. I. C., can. 859, § 3.

²⁰⁷; Ferreres, *Compend. Theol.*

⁷ St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Mor.*, n.

Mor., Vol. I, pp. 388 sq.

mitted to confession and Communion as soon as they have arrived at the age of discretion, which generally happens about the seventh year. Of course, they should first be duly instructed. The fitness of a child to be admitted to first Communion *in forma privata* is to be judged by the confessor and the parents. Children who are not able to grasp the elementary truths of the Catholic religion are not permitted to receive holy Communion.⁸ If confessors and parents neglect their duty, the pastor is obliged to see to it that the children are admitted to the Holy Table as soon as they have attained the use of reason and are properly disposed. For this purpose he may hold an examination if he sees fit.⁹ But to admit children to first Communion is not strictly a parochial right, and all synodal decrees or particular customs treating it as such are abrogated by the new Code.¹⁰

Parents, confessors, teachers, and pastors are in conscience bound to see to it that all minors entrusted to their care comply regularly with their Easter duty after they have been admitted to first Communion.¹¹

5. The *history of this precept* has been traced at length by Villien.¹² In the early days of Christianity no law

⁸ C. I. C., can. 854, § 1; cfr. P. Vol. II, p. 241; P. Chas. Augustine, Chas. Augustine, *Commentary on Commentary*, Vol. IV, p. 228.
the New Code, Vol. IV, pp. 226 sqq. ¹¹ C. I. C., can. 860.

⁹ C. I. C. can. 854, § 5.

¹⁰ Ferreres, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*,

¹² *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 189-223.

was required to induce the faithful to receive holy Communion frequently. But already in the time of St. Augustine the practice of communicating on certain days, or at certain periods, was imposed either by custom or by a law or precept.¹³ The Council of Agde, in Gaul (506), treated those who did not communicate on the three great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, as apostates.¹⁴ This ruling was substantially adopted by other councils, and finally through divers collections of canons and capitularies found its way into Gratian's *Decretum* and thereby became, so to speak, a universal law.¹⁵ In course of time some churches succeeded in inducing the faithful to receive Communion every Sunday in Lent, but the main obligation, the minimum below which no one was allowed to fall without being cut off from Christian fellowship, was annual communion.¹⁶ The fourth Lateran Council rendered the discipline uniform by requiring nothing more than the minimum universally accepted. Its famous twenty-first canon, "*Omnis utriusque sexus*," has substantially found its way into the new Code.

READINGS.—Ths. Slater, S. J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 578 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 716 sqq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 387 sqq.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 330 sqq.

Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, English ed., pp. 189 sqq.

¹³ Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 195 sq.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

CHAPTER V

THE PRECEPT OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE SUPPORT OF CHURCH AND PASTOR

1. The Church claims the right, independently of the civil power to exact from the faithful whatever is necessary for divine worship, for the decent support of the clergy, and for all other purposes implied in her divine mission.¹

To this right corresponds, on the part of the faithful, the duty of paying public worship to God and of providing the means necessary for that worship and for the support of those engaged in it. "Know you not," says St. Paul, "that they who work in the holy place eat the things that are of the holy place; and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar? So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel."²

"As there was special provision made by God for the support of the priests and the maintenance of religion under the Old Law, so under the New Law our Lord commanded that His ministers should be supported by those to whom they ministered. The faithful then are

¹ C. I. C., can. 1496.

² 1 Cor. IX, 13 sqq.

bound by divine precept to contribute according to their means to the support of their pastors.”³

2. The *manner* in which this obligation must be met is determined by the Church for every age and country.

The historians of ecclesiastical discipline trace the custom of paying tithes to the very beginning of the Christian era. Thomassin finds its first recorded manifestation in the conduct of those among the early Christians who sold their property and gave the proceeds to the Apostles for their own support and that of the poor.⁴ Origen derived the precept from Holy Writ.⁵ St. Caesarius of Arles admonished his diocesans to “give the tithes of their harvest each year to the Church and to the poor,” adding that good Christians should not be content with obeying this precept, but should dedicate the surplus of the remaining nine-tenths of their crops to the needy.⁶ The law enjoining the payment of tithes can be traced back to the Council of Mâcon (585), which decreed a revival of the “ancient custom” according to which the tithe was paid by all under pain of excommunication.⁷ Under the Carolingian régime the tithe attained its full development as a fiscal obligation. Gratian’s *Decretum*, published about the middle of the twelfth century, contains some twenty texts on the subject. In course of time, however, the tithe as a legal tax became odious and was no longer enforced. In France it was suppressed after the Revolution by a series of laws, beginning with that of Sept. 21,

³ Thos. Slater, S. J., *Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, p. 580.

⁴ *Ancienne et Nouvelle Discipline de l'Eglise*, P. III, Y. 1, c. 1.

⁵ See Migne, *P.G.*, XII, 640 sqq.

⁶ Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, p. 327.

⁷ See the text in Villien, *op. cit.*, pp. 329 sq.

1789.⁸ In the countries where it is still enforced as a true tax of obligation, says Villien, "when one gives what he can, no more is demanded."⁹

The new Code of Canon Law provides that, "so far as regards tithes and the payment of tithes and first-fruits, the peculiar statutes and praiseworthy customs of each country should be observed."¹⁰

Regarding statutes, can. 1507 says: "The taxes to be paid throughout each ecclesiastical province for the various acts of voluntary jurisdiction, or for the execution of Apostolic rescripts, or on the occasion of the administration of the Sacraments or sacramentals, should be determined by a provincial council or at a meeting of the bishops of the province; but no decision taken by them shall go into force until it has been approved by the Holy See."

3. The *obligation*, then, of contributing to the support of church and pastor is a dictate both of religion and of justice, and consequently grave; but it is not easy to determine when a mortal sin is committed in particular cases by failure to comply with this duty. Archbishop Kenrick says: "All must be convinced that each individual Catholic is in duty bound to contribute something on his part towards the necessary support of the clergy; but as long as this obligation is not enjoined and defined by any

⁸ Villien, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

¹⁰ *C. I. C.*, can. 1052.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 355.

definite law, we would not venture to condemn any one as guilty of mortal sin who neglects to contribute a fair share, provided there is no danger that the clergy suffer want and provided others are not unduly burdened on this account. However, those who, in the circumstances just described, refuse to give anything out of avarice, seem to be guilty of grave fault and unworthy of sacramental absolution, because they transgress the law of Christ our Lord concerning the support of the ministers of the gospel and endanger their own salvation and that of others.”¹¹

This passage from Kenrick is quoted in Sabetti-Barrett's *Compendium Theologiae Moralis*, the manual of moral theology now most widely used in our seminaries, with the following statute of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore appended as a warning to the clergy not to be too exacting in their demands: “Rumor has it (oh, that it were groundless and false!) that in some places are found priests who, when no grave fault is apparent, deny the benefit of sacramental absolution to those of the faithful who refuse to contribute to collections a share to which it is not clear that they are obliged under pain

11 F. P. Kenrick, *Theol. Mor.*, 2nd ed., Malines 1860, p. 142: “Id autem omnibus persuasum esse debet oportere ut singuli pro sua parte aliquid conferant, ne sustentatione necessaria indigeant sacerdotes: sed quamdiu nulla certâ lege onus iniungitur et definitur, non audemus peccati mortalis damnare eum, qui omittit æquam portionem conferre, quoties non est periculum ne sacerdotes

ea de causa indigeant, vel alii fideles nimis graventur. Illi autem qui prae avaritia recusant quid dare, in iis quæ indicavimus adiunctis, videntur graviter rei, et indigni venia sacramentali: violant enim legem Christi Domini de ministrorum Evangelii sustentatione, et se aliosque obiciunt discrimini salutis.”

of mortal sin, nay, who even (what is far more contemptible) refuse to assist the sick and the dying and to bring them the Sacraments."¹²

"Much depends," says Father Slater, "on the degree of necessity in which a pastor is placed, and on the means of the parishioner."¹³ Entrance into the church during divine worship should be absolutely free to all, regardless of any contrary custom existing before the promulgation of the Code.¹⁴ No priest is justified in refusing the consolations of religion to the dying on the ground that they have neglected the duty of supporting their pastors during life. The priest is bound to his flock by such exalted ties that his actions must not even be suspected of material motives.

4. Sabetti-Barrett's *Compendium* in this connection asks and answers two practical questions, to wit:

a) May priests who do not receive sufficient support from their parishioners collect alms outside the limits of their parishes? Answer: No, unless they have obtained permission from their own bishop. For the Baltimore Council says: "Since grave inconveniences may arise from the practice of unattached and unknown priests going about collecting alms from the faithful, it has pleased us strictly to forbid any priest, without the written permission of his Ordinary, to collect alms outside the congregation entrusted to his care, or in any other diocese without the permission of the Ordinary of the same."¹⁵

¹² *Conc. Plen. Balt.* III, n. 292; Sabetti-Barrett, *Comp. Theol. Mor.*, 27th ed., p. 333. The passage reads as follows in the original: "*Fama fert (quae utinam inanis mendaxque sit!) nonnullis in locis inveniri sacerdotes qui, ubi gravis culpa non apparet, sacramentalis absolutionis beneficium denegant fidelibus, qui nolint collectis stipem dare, ad quam*

sub peccato gravi teneri non constet; imo etiam (quod longe detestabilius est) aegrotantibus ac morti proximis adsistere, ac sacramenta praebere recusant."

¹³ Slater, *Manual of Moral Theol.*, Vol. I, p. 581.

¹⁴ *C. I. C.*, can. 1181.

¹⁵ *Conc. Plen. Balt.* II., n. 119; III, nn. 294 sqq.

b) The question whether a priest may leave the altar during Mass to take up a collection, is answered by the same authors negatively, in view of the prohibition contained in the decrees of the Second and Third Plenary Councils of Baltimore.¹⁶

In collecting the customary revenues from the faithful the clergy should carefully avoid anything and everything that might arouse a suspicion of avarice or render the Catholic religion odious to the faithful or contemptible to non-Catholics.¹⁷

READINGS.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. I, pp. 580 sq.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 748 sq.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 382 sq.—J. Wernz, S.J., *Ius Decretalium*, Vol. III, nn. 142, 214.—Sabetti-Barrett, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, pp. 332 sqq.—F. P. Kenrick, *Theologia Moralis*, 2nd ed., Vol. I, Malines 1860, pp. 140 sqq.

A. Villien, *History of the Commandments of the Church*, pp. 320–356.

¹⁶ Sabetti-Barrett, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, pp. 333; *Conc. Plen. Balt. III*, n. 293: "Gravissima sunt verba Concilii superioris, quibus damnavit perversam agendi rationem illorum sacerdotum, qui ipsa intra missarum solemniam ab altari recedunt, aedemque sacram circumeunt, a singulis fidelibus eleemosynam petentes. Tanta vero apparet quorundam pertinacia ac in observandis etiam strictissimis legibus socordia, ut qui constituti sumus legum ecclesiasticarum custodes, altâ voce decre-

tum antecessorum nostrorum de novo promulgare et inculcare constringamur. Notatum itaque 'turpissimum abusum, Ecclesiae sacrisque eius ritibus iniurium, quique Catholicorum ruborem et indignationem, acatholicorum vero irri- sionem et contemptum provocat, reprobamus et prorsus extirpandum decernimus. Qua in re singulorum episcoporum conscientia oneratur.'"

¹⁷ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 749.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAW OF THE CHURCH CONCERNING BOOKS

1. The legislation of the Church concerning books is partly *preventive* and partly *repressive*.

2. Its *underlying principle* is stated thus in the new Code: "The Church has the right to demand that the faithful should not publish books which she herself has not previously examined, and also, for a just cause, to forbid books, by whomsoever published." ¹

The laws now in force, both in regard to preventive censorship and the prohibition of books, are contained in Book III, Title XXIII, can. 1384 to 1405, of the Code. All previous legislation is expressly abrogated, but the Index of Forbidden Books, as last edited and published in the year 1900, remains in force.²

3. The laws of both censorship and prohibition affect not only books properly so called,³ but also periodical publications, in fact all published writings, except where the contrary is evident from the text of a law. Hence, generally speaking,

¹ C. I. C., can. 1384, § 1.

² See *infra*, pp. 415 sqq.

³ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 701.

this legislation does not apply to manuscripts, type-written or lithographed sheets, etc., unless they are issued in considerable numbers and sold like books; nor does it apply to non-periodical publications of very small size and insignificant content.⁴

4. Though all laws referring to the censorship and prohibition of books may be interpreted leniently, yet, as St. Alphonsus says, in matters of this kind it is ordinarily better to follow the stricter opinion.⁵

No prohibitive law on this subject ceases to bind except when it would miss its purpose by being obeyed, as when one is obliged to refute a forbidden book and cannot obtain timely permission to read the same. The reason is that such laws are based upon the general presumption that the thing prohibited constitutes a universal danger.⁶

⁴ C. I. C., can. 1381, § 2; cfr. J. B. Ferreres, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 625 sqq.; Noldin, *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 726 sq.

⁵ A. M. Arregui, S.J., *Summarium Theol. Mor.*, 4th ed., p. 256.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

SECTION I

THE PREVENTIVE CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS

I. The preventive censorship of books consists in an examination made before they are published, followed by a judgment of approbation or condemnation.

1. The previous permission of the Holy See is required for the publication of

a) Any authentic collection, in whatever language, of prayers and pious works to which the Holy See has attached indulgences; and of

b) Any list of Apostolic indulgences, or summary of indulgences, whether collected at some former time and never approved, or newly collected from diverse documents;¹ also of

c) Any vernacular translation of Holy Scripture *without* notes drawn from the writings of the holy Fathers and of Catholic theologians;² with the possible exception of certain devotional parts of the Bible, which are apt to kindle the piety of the faithful, such as the Psalter, the Sunday gospels, etc.; these, according to a probable opinion,³ the bishop can permit without notes.

¹ C. I. C., can. 1388, § 2.

² C. I. C., can. 1391.

³ Ferreres, *Compend. Theol. Mex.*,
Vol. I, p. 632.

2. The permission of the Sacred Congregation of Rites is required for the publication of anything and everything pertaining to the beatification and canonization of saints.⁴

3. The permission of the prefects of the various Roman congregations is necessary for reprinting the decrees of the respective congregations in new editions.⁵

4. The permission of the diocesan Ordinary, that is, the bishop of the diocese in which the author lives, or in which the book is printed or published, is required for the publication of

a) Any book, pamphlet, summary or leaflet containing indulgences,⁶ and of

b) All books of Holy Scripture, or notes or commentaries on the same,⁷ or translations or paraphrases of such books in the vernacular with notes from the Fathers and approved theologians,⁸ or books which treat of Sacred Scripture, revealed or natural theology, Church history, Canon Law, ethics, and other religious and moral disciplines;⁹ and of

c) Books or pamphlets containing prayers, devotions or instructions on religious, moral, ascetical, mystical or similar subjects, even though they appear to promote piety;¹⁰ and of

⁴ C. I. C., can. 1395 sq.

⁵ C. I. C., can. 1389.

⁶ C. I. C., can. 1388, § 1.

⁷ C. I. C., can. 1385, § 1, n. 1.

⁸ C. I. C., can. 1391.

⁹ C. I. C., can. 1385, § 1, n. 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

d) Any other writings having special reference to, or involving the interests of, faith or morals;¹¹ and of

e) Sacred images or pictures, no matter how manifolded, with or without prayers attached.¹²

5. No cleric may publish books on profane subjects, or write for newspapers or magazines, or edit any periodical publications, without the permission of his Ordinary.¹³

6. Religious, besides the permission of the diocesan Ordinary, must have also that of their major superior in order to publish any of the things listed under n. 5 and n. 4, b, c, d, and e.¹⁴

Except for a just and reasonable cause, approved by the Ordinary of the diocese, neither clerics nor laymen are allowed to write for newspapers, reviews, or magazines that habitually attack Catholic faith or morals.

The permission of the Bishop (*imprimatur*) must be printed in the beginning or at the end of the book or picture thus approved, and must contain the name of the Ordinary or his representative, together with the place and date when the permission was granted.¹⁵

A new *imprimatur* is required for the translation of an approved book into some other language and for each new edition of the book itself, but not for articles or excerpts reprinted from periodicals.¹⁶

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Can. 1385, § 1, n. 3.

¹³ C. I. C., can. 1386, § 1.

¹⁴ C. I. C., can. 1385, § 3; can. 1386.

¹⁵ C. I. C., can. 1391, § 1.

¹⁶ C. I. C., can. 1392.

No episcopal *imprimatur* is necessary for reprinting liturgical books or any parts thereof, or litanies approved by the Holy See, but the Ordinary of the diocese where they are printed or published must certify that the text conforms to the originals.¹⁷

¹⁷ C. I. C., can. 1390.

SECTION 2

THE PROHIBITION OF BOOKS

1. The right and duty to forbid books for a just cause belongs:

a) For the universal Church, to the Supreme Pontiff and to ecumenical councils;

b) For their respective subjects,

a) To the diocesan Ordinaries and particular councils;

β) To the abbots of independent monasteries and to the highest superiors of exempt institutes of religious clerics, acting together with their chapter or council; or,

γ) When delay would be dangerous, to the other major superiors, acting with the advice of their consultors; but in this case the highest superior must be informed of the matter as soon as possible.¹

2. Laws prohibiting books do not affect:

a) Cardinals, bishops (diocesan and titular), and other Ordinaries,² including the major superiors of exempt clerical orders,³ all of whom, however, must apply the necessary precautions.

¹ C. I. C., can. 1395.

³ C. I. C., can. 198, § 1.

² C. I. C., can. 1401.

When issued by the Roman Pontiff or by his authority, these laws do affect.

b) All other members of the Church, no matter where they live or into what language the forbidden books are translated; when issued by an inferior prelate, they bind all his subjects.⁴

4 3. The common law of the Church, as laid down in the Code, forbids:

a) All editions of the original text and the ancient Catholic versions of Sacred Scripture, including those of the Eastern Church, when published by non-Catholics; also all translations of the Bible or any part thereof, into whatever tongue, when made by non-Catholics or edited by them.⁵

The use of such editions of Holy Scripture and vernacular translations as lack the required approbation is permitted to those who are engaged in theological or scriptural studies, provided, however, that the editions are faithfully and completely edited and do not attack the doctrines of the Catholic Church, either in their prolegomena or notes.⁶

b) The common law further forbids all books, pamphlets, leaflets, and periodicals, no matter by whom composed, that defend heresy or schism, or in any way strive to undermine the foundations of religion.⁷

⁴ C. I. C., can. 1395 sq.

⁵ C. I. C., can. 1399.

⁶ C. I. C., can. 1400.

⁷ C. I. C., can. 1399, n. 2.

This prohibition, in the opinion of competent theologians, includes all writings which in word or picture (caricature) ridicule religion and aim at subverting its foundations. But it does not include encyclopedias compiled by Catholics and non-Catholics in collaboration, even though the articles contributed by the latter may contain heresies or champion materialism and other grievous errors.⁸

c) The common law of the Church also forbids all books that purposely or professedly attack religion or morals.⁹

d) Also all books written by non-Catholics, which treat *ex professo*¹⁰ of religion, unless it is certain that they contain nothing against the Catholic faith.¹¹

e) Likewise, unapproved editions of, or commentaries upon Sacred Scripture, or translations into the vernacular, whether with or without notes; also those mentioned supra, as well as all books describing new apparitions, revelations, visions, prophecies, or miracles or introducing new devotions, even though it be under the pretext that they are private, if published without canonical approbation.¹²

f) The common law also forbids books which

⁸ Cfr. Arregui, *Summarium Theol. Mor.*, p. 260; Ferreres, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, p. 636.

⁹ C. I. C., can. 1399, n. 3.

¹⁰ On the meaning of this phrase see Timothy Hurley, *A Commem-*

tary on the Present Index Legislation, Dublin 1907, pp. 84 sqq.

¹¹ C. I. C., can. 1399, n. 4.

¹² C. I. C., can. 1385, § 1, n. 1; can. 1391; can. 1385, § 1, n. 2; cfr. Ferreres, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, p. 638.

impugn or deride any Catholic dogma, or defend errors that have been condemned by the Holy See, or detract from divine worship, or attempt to subvert the discipline of the Church, or purposely (*datâ operâ*) malign the ecclesiastical hierarchy or the clerical or religious state.

g) All books that teach or recommend any form of superstition, witchcraft, divination, magic, the evocation of spirits, or other similar practices.

h) All books that represent duelling, suicide or divorce as permissible, or defend Freemasonic or other societies of the same kind as useful and not pernicious to Church and society.

i) Also all books which treat *ex professo* of lascivious or obscene things.

j) Also any and all editions of approved liturgical books in which anything has been changed, so that they no longer agree with the authentic originals approved by the Holy See.

k) Also all books containing spurious indulgences or such as have been proscribed or revoked by the Holy See.

l) Also images or pictures, no matter how manifolded, of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels and saints or other servants of God, depicted contrary to the mind and the decrees of the Church.¹³

¹³ C. I. C., can. 1399; cfr. Ferreres, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 637.

The last-mentioned prohibition does not affect statues, coins, or paintings.

4. The effects of the prohibition of a book by the ecclesiastical authorities are indicated in canon 1398, as follows:

a) The prohibition of a book has the effect that it cannot, without due permission, be published, printed, or read, or retained, or sold, or translated into another language, or in any way communicated to others.¹⁴

b) A book which has been in any way forbidden, may not be republished except after the necessary corrections have been made and permission has been obtained from him who forbade it, or from his superior or successor in office.¹⁵

To *publish* a book (*edere*) means to cause it to be manifolded and disseminated, either at one's own expense, or at the expense of somebody else.¹⁶

To *read* a book means to peruse it understandingly, not merely to listen to its being read, or gaze at the letters without comprehending their significance.

To *retain* a book means to keep it in one's house, or to entrust it to another, without relinquishing one's ownership. This prohibition does not affect book-binders and librarians.

A forbidden book may not be sold, either publicly or in private, nor may it be given or loaned to any one who has not permission to read forbidden books.

¹⁴ C. I. C., can. 1398, § 1.

¹⁵ C. I. C., can. 1398, § 2.

¹⁶ A. Vermeersch, S.J., *De Pro-*

hibitione et Censura Librorum, 4th ed., Rome 1906, n. 49, 121.

5. The laws of the Church on books bind *per se* under pain of mortal sin, but admit of *parvitas materiæ*.

It is a mortal sin to retain a dangerous book that has been forbidden by the Church, for more than a month, or to read any considerable part of it, or to read any passage in it which is apt to cause serious danger to faith or morals. It is also grievously sinful to read habitually forbidden newspapers or magazines, or any sizeable pamphlet or article directly opposed to faith or morals.

6. *Permission to read and retain books* forbidden by the common law of the Church or by decree of the Apostolic See, can be obtained for a just and reasonable cause from the Supreme Pontiff, either personally or through the Roman Congregations.

The diocesan bishop can give permission to individuals to read single forbidden books in urgent cases. If he has obtained the necessary faculty for this purpose from the Holy See, he may also give a general permission, but should not do so except for a just and reasonable cause.

The general faculty to read forbidden books does not extend to books specially forbidden by the Ordinaries, unless the respective papal indult contains the clause "*a quisbuslibet damnatos*," or something to the same effect.¹⁷

¹⁷ C. I. C., can. 1402, sq.

No permission, from whomsoever obtained, excuses a person from obeying the precept of the natural law which forbids the reading of books that constitute a proximate occasion of sin, and commands that forbidden books be properly safeguarded, so that they do not fall into the hands of those who are not allowed to read them.¹⁸

Catholic booksellers are forbidden to sell, loan or retain books that treat *ex professo*, i. e., of set purpose, of obscene things, and they should not sell prohibited books unless they have permission to do so from the Holy See, and even then, should sell them only to those of whom it may be prudently presumed that they are authorized to read and keep them.¹⁹

7. To *denounce dangerous books* is a duty incumbent upon all Catholics, but especially upon clerics and ecclesiastical dignitaries, and among these more particularly upon the delegates of the Apostolic See, the diocesan Ordinaries, and the rectors of Catholic universities.²⁰ Denunciation may be made either to the Ordinary of the diocese, or directly to the Holy See, and should contain not only the title of the book, but also, if possible, a statement of the reasons why it is considered dangerous.²¹ Those who receive such a

¹⁸ C. I. C., can. 1405, § 1; can. 1403, § 2.

¹⁹ C. I. C., can. 1404; cfr. A. M. Arregui, S.J., *Summarium Theol.*

Mor., of which we have made liberal use in compiling this section.

²⁰ C. I. C., can. 1397, § 1.

²¹ C. I. C., can. 1397, § 1 and 2.

denunciation are bound in conscience to keep the name of the accuser secret.²² Local Ordinaries should, either personally or through reliable priests, watch over the books published and sold within their territories.²³

Books that demand a more careful examination or call for action on the part of the supreme authority, should be submitted by the Ordinaries to the judgment of the Holy See.²⁴

To decide whether this or that particular book is forbidden by the general laws of the Church is left to the judgment of the individual, unless a special declaration exists on the subject. Hence, when one is in doubt as to the character of a book, whether it belongs to the category of forbidden books or not, one is allowed to read as much of it as may be necessary to form an opinion. Those who are unable to form a judgment for themselves, should consult learned men, especially their pastor or confessor.²⁵

Generally speaking, the *law of nature* forbids the reading of any book that one feels to be dangerous to faith or morals. Nor does that law make any distinction between bad books of one kind or another, or between the manner of reading, whether a book be read in the ordinary way or by listening to others. The prohibition ceases with the danger. Consequently, the same

²² C. I. C., can. 1397, § 3.

²³ C. I. C., can. 1397, § 4.

²⁴ C. I. C., can. 1397, § 5.

²⁵ H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, p. 747.

book may be prohibited to one person and permitted to another.

The gravity of the sin committed by reading a book forbidden by the *law of nature* depends, not on the quality or size of the volume, but simply and solely on the danger arising to the reader from its perusal. If there is proximate danger of mortal sin, the act of reading such a book is mortally sinful; but if the danger of mortal sin is remote, or there is danger of committing a venial sin only, the act of reading is venially sinful. Hence it is permitted, for a proportionately grave reason, to read books from which only a slight or remote danger of sin is to be feared.²⁶

READINGS.—A. M. Arregui, S.J., *Summarium Theol. Mor.*, 4th ed., Bilbao 1919, pp. 250–263.—Sabetti-Barrett, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, 28th ed., New York 1920, pp. 334–342.—J. B. Ferreres, S.J., *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, 9th ed., Barcelona 1918, pp. 404–419.—Joseph Hilgers, S.J., art. "Censorship of Books," in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, pp. 519 sqq.—T. Hurley, *Commentary on the Present Index Legislation*, Dublin 1907.—A. Vermeersch, S.J., *De Prohibitione et Censura Librorum*, 4th ed., Rome 1906.—J. Hollweck, *Das kirchliche Bücherverbot*, 2nd ed., Mayence, 1897.—Alb. Sleumer, *Index Romanus*, 6th ed., Osnabrück 1915.—Ph. Schneider, *Die neuen Büchergesetze der Kirche*, Mayence 1900.—G. Péries, *L'Index*, Paris 1898.—A. Boudinhon, *La Nouvelle Législation de l'Index*, Paris 1899.—J. Wernz, *Ius Decretalium*, Vol. III, Rome 1901, n. 95–131.—H. Noldin, S.J., *Summa Theol. Mor.*, Vol. II, pp. 722 sqq.—J. Hilgers, S.J., *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher*, Freiburg i. B. 1904.—Art. "Index of Prohibited Books" in the *Catholic Dictionary*, 9th ed., London

²⁶ Noldin, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 736 sqq.

1917, pp. 449 sqq.—Thos. Slater, S.J., *A Manual of Moral Theology*, Vol. II, pp. 459 sqq. (contains the full text, in English, of Leo XIII's Constitution "*Officiorum et munerum*").

SECTION 3

THE INDEX OF FORBIDDEN BOOKS

1. The whole of the Church's organization against pernicious literature is generally called the Index. In this organization there are three principal parts—(a) the laws governing the censorship and prohibition of books, as set forth in the preceding two Sections, (b) the Congregation of the Index, which has lately been combined with the Congregation of the Holy Office, and (3) the Index of Forbidden Books, *i. e.*, a list or catalogue of books which are expressly forbidden to Catholics. This list forms the second and larger part of the volume entitled "*Index Librorum Prohibitorum*," which, up to the publication of the new Code, contained the entire ecclesiastical legislation relating to books. The general laws have now been superseded by the respective canons of the Code, but the list or catalogue remains in force, as revised under Leo XIII and re-edited under Pius X, and is being added to at irregular intervals.

2. The Church has always exercised the greatest vigilance in protecting her children against the

dangers that lurk in unregulated reading. Lists of dangerous and therefore forbidden books were drawn up in various dioceses or provinces at a very early date. Pope Pontianus condemned the heretical writings of Origen. Leo the Great suppressed the books of the Priscillianists. Leo IX condemned the writings of Scotus Eriugena and Berengarius on the Holy Eucharist. The Council of Constance ordered all the books of John Hus to be publicly burnt. Leo X, in the Bull "*Exsurge*" (1520), condemned the earlier heretical writings of Luther.

The first Roman "Index of Prohibited Books" was published in 1559, under Paul IV. Each succeeding edition contained new titles. Leo XIII reorganized the ecclesiastical legislation in regard to forbidden books and revised the catalogue known as "Index," giving it the form it still retains. A few dozen titles have been added since this revision (1900).

3. It is a mistake to assume that all forbidden books are on the Index. In matter of fact only a very small portion of the books proscribed by the natural law and by ecclesiastical decrees are mentioned in that catalogue. Nor does it contain the worst books in their respective classes, as some people imagine, but merely those which were at one time or another reported to the Holy See and formally condemned.

The clause "*opera omnia*" includes only those books of an author which treat of religious subjects or are forbidden by a general or a special decree of the Holy See, *e. g.*, on account of their obscenity.¹ It does not include books published by the same author after the promulgation of the "*opera omnia*" decree, though they may justly be regarded as suspect and presumed to fall under some general decree, unless the writer has given signs of a change of mind.²

The clause "*donec corrigatur*" has reference only to the manner of the prohibition, not to its effect.³

4. Laymen should guide themselves by the advice of their confessor in all matters pertaining to dangerous books and newspapers.⁴

The confessor himself should follow the directions of the bishop and always remember the admonition of St. Alphonsus that in matters of this kind it is ordinarily safer to follow the stricter in preference to the more lenient opinion.⁵

¹ See the Preface to the Index. If there is question of a Catholic and "*de certo aliquo eiusdem libro constet, eum neque ullo decreto generali, neque alio speciali prohiberi, hunc ab ea generali præscriptione eximi non temere existimaveris.*" (Ed. 3a, Rome 1911).

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ S. C. Inquis., 1832, *ad Episc.*

Helvet. The bishops of Switzerland had inquired: "*An fideles, salvâ conscientiâ, legere possint ephemerides vel libros, qui censuram Ordinarii non subierunt?*" The answer was: "*Recurrant ad confessarium.*" (Cfr. Ferreres, *Compend. Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, p. 418).

⁵ "*In hac re expedit ordinarie rigidiores opiniones sequi.*" Cfr. Ferreres, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 418.

READINGS.—J. B. Ferreres, *Compendium Theol. Mor.*, Vol. I, pp. 417 sqq.—G. Péries, *L'Index*, Paris 1898.—J. Hilgers, S.J., *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher*, Freiburg i. B. 1904 (the *opus classicum* on the subject).—F. X. Betten, S.J., *The Roman Index of Forbidden Books*, 6th ed., St. Louis 1920 (a useful summary in popular style.)—J. Hollweck, *Das Kirchliche Bührenverbot*, 2nd ed., Mayence 1897.

APPENDIX

The Fathers of the First Provincial Council of Baltimore, in 1829, petitioned the Holy See for a prolongation of the Paschal season from the first Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday, inclusive. The petition was granted by the S. C. de Propaganda Fide, Sept. 26, 1830.¹ The concession reads: "*petitam facultatem concessit*," without a time limit. It entered the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, in 1866,² and thus became a particular law for the United States. As such it would have to go according to can. 6, n. 1 of the new Code; but as the grant was originally made in the form of a faculty or an indult, and particular privileges and indults remain in force even after the promulgation of the Code, unless expressly revoked, our bishops may, and some of them do, continue to make use of this privilege of extending the Paschal season.

¹ *Coll. Lac. Conc.*, t. III, col. 36.

² *Coll. cit.*, l. c., col. 464.

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